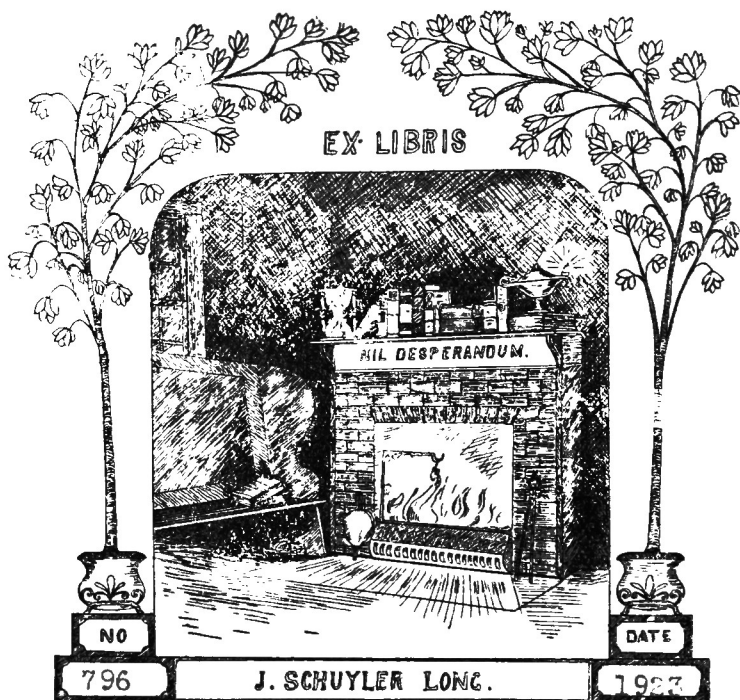


ECHOES OF OTHER DAYS



HOWARD GLYNDON

(Laura G. R. Searing)



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Echoes of Other Days



By

HOWARD GLYNDON

(Laura C. R. Searing)

Laura Catherine (Redden) Searing

1921

HARR WAGNER PUBLISHING CO.

San Francisco, California

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TO MY MOTHER.

This volume of poems written by my beloved mother, Laura Catherine Redden Searing, has been compiled by me in loving thought of her who has been the inspiration of my life, my ideal of womanhood, and my treasured companion since childhood.

May my children and their children's children read, mark, and learn the story of her who gave so freely of love and of self, and whose one desire was to be of service.

ELSA S. MCGINN.

San Mateo, December, 1921.

BIOGRAPHY.

Laura Catherine Redden Searing, known to the literary world as "Howard Glyndon," was gifted at birth with the soul of a poet. Life laid an apparent handicap upon her in early childhood when depriving her of her hearing; but, instead of allowing that misfortune to hamper her progress, she verily made it a blessing. Living as it were in a world of silence, she voiced her thoughts with poetic vision, gladdening the hearts of those in sorrow, uplifting the weary and discouraged, and holding aloft the beacon light to light others on to success, exemplifying to the world that earnest endeavor is not in vain.

Born in Somerset County, Maryland, February 9, 1840, she traces her lineage through her maternal grandfather to Sir William Waller, one of the original proprietors of Maryland, and farther back to Edmund Waller, the celebrated wit and poet of the days of Cromwell and the Restoration. Her ancestry is in close collateral line with that of the "great and good John Hampton," and her poetical inspiration and patriotic fervor came to her from direct sources.

In early childhood her parents moved to Missouri, and it was while very young that she was afflicted with the illness which darkened her life. Her own account of that period follows, and tells its tragic story with a characteristic directness.

"HOW I LEARNED TO TALK AGAIN."

Losing the Voice in Childhood and Recovering It in Womanhood—An Articulation School—The Experience of "Howard Glyndon."

(Written for the Evening Star, April 19, 1884.)

I became deaf suddenly when about eleven years old from acute disease, or rather from a complication of acute diseases. I had up to that time, with the exception of an attack of ague in the preceding fall, been accounted an unusually healthy child, not having been confined to my bed by any sickness since infancy. All my senses were unusually acute and my organization vigorous, while at the

same time extraordinarily sensitive. I had, however, grown very fast, having at the time I speak of almost finished growing, I began to go to day school at the beginning of an unusually severe winter, just after recovering from the ague, for which I had been given large quantities of quinine. This may have weakened the system of a growing child, so that more care than usual was necessary; but, as I seemed well, no notice was given to a severe cold which I took about two weeks before Christmas. It ran on for a week or so, and then one afternoon I came home with such a drowsy feeling that I at once threw myself on a bed, and stupor ensued. I remember nothing more of any consequence until weeks afterwards, when I awoke as from a long, deep sleep, and saw the doctor and my mother standing beside my bed talking together. I could not hear anything they said, and, possibly, when they each in turn spoke to me, I only stared at them, though perfectly conscious. This led to an investigation, when it was discovered that I was utterly deaf. During my convalescence there was no way to talk to me but by writing, and so my school slate and pencil became my constant companions.

As I regained health examinations of my ears were made and different forms of treatment tried. I had grown totally deaf in both ears without any apparent change of any sort, and, so far as I knew, without ever having had any trouble with my ears—not so much as a pain in them. Examinations told nothing; and, after everything available had been tried with no result, the doctors suggested that the nerve of hearing had been either completely destroyed or paralyzed. From that time to this I have not heard a sound; but I have been quite sensitive to vibrations, which convey many sounds, even that of the human voice, but not to the extent of distinguishing quality and tones, not to say words.

As I began to mingle again with others this peculiarity was noticed; that my voice had undergone so great a change that those who had known me previous to my sickness testified that they could not recognize me by my voice alone. It had become sepulchral, like a voice from the grave. Some delicate chords of my throat must have been injured by my illness. Indeed, for a long time I suffered a great deal with my throat. Speaking was to me an effort, but still not so much of an effort but that I could have continued to talk as best I could, only some of my family, with injudicious frankness, told me how unpleasant my voice had grown. Before my illness I had an unusually pleasant voice, it was said, in reading and in singing, as well as in talking. It was especially spoken of as being always so very natural and spontaneous; but now it had

grown unnatural and strained. I soon began to be sensitive about using it, and talked less and less. I, however, from time to time, made efforts in my unaided way to correct the trouble, but receiving no assistance—for none then knew how to help me—I grew worse and worse. After a few years I was sent to a sign school, and contracted the habit there of relying entirely on pencil and paper for conversation with all who did not understand signs or the manual alphabet. When I left the school, after being there nearly two years, and returned home again, although I still talked at home and was partially understood by the members of my immediate family, I abandoned altogether the attempt to talk to any one else. Indeed, the fact that an outsider was listening to me would check me instantly. In this way there grew up in me a nervous impediment of speech, in addition to other drawbacks. Yet I had the most intense desire to use my voice as others did, though certainly it was enough to discourage me to have strangers stop and turn around curiously at the sound of my speaking, and to see the look of non-comprehension on the face of any one not familiar with me, if I addressed them orally. I did not like to see people look at each other and ask, "What does she say?" At last I might almost be said to be really dumb as well as deaf; and this continued until 1871. About that time I heard of the first articulation school ever established in this country, the Clarke institution, at Northampton, Mass. It owed its existence to a large bequest, left for the purpose of establishing it, by Mr. John Clarke, of Northampton, who himself became gradually very deaf, and, for this reason probably, had great sympathy with other deaf people. However, the money to found such a school would have been useless for that purpose had not a fitting principal been found in the person of Miss Harriet Rogers, of Billerica, Mass. She was a sister of the lady whom Dr. Howe, of Boston, selected to have charge of Laura Bridgman in his benevolent experiments with the deaf, dumb and blind girl. The beginning of Miss Rogers' career as a teacher of articulation and lip reading for the deaf dated from her taking a little girl who had become deaf in babyhood, to teach. When I first went to the Clarke school it had been open but a short time. My articulation then was indistinct and often unintelligible. There was a failure to sound consonants and gutturals generally. My pronunciation was about as bad as my articulation; but perhaps the most unpleasant thing was the pitch of my voice, which was very high—a falsetto—and strained, while my enunciation was unusually rapid. Of all these things I was not at the time aware. I only

know that I did not speak like other people, and that it was an unpleasant effort for me to speak.

The first thing done was to teach me the "sound" or sounds of each letter in the alphabet. We all learn the "names" of the letters of the alphabet, but few of us are consciously aware that the name of the letter and its sound are as different things as it is to spell a word by the names of the letters of the alphabet and then pronounce it by their sounds. This drill helped me to analyze the sounds I made, and to know HOW I made them was a great help. I learned to give the proper sounds by placing my hand on the teacher's throat and feeling what she did with the muscles of the throat and by watching the position of the lips, tongue and teeth, and their movements when she made a given sound. I also learned the proper pronunciation of words, accents and emphasis in the same way. I was then put through a vocal drill of the vowel sounds every day. But the most difficult thing of all was to get me to use the chart tones. I at first had no conception of how it was done, and for months my teachers labored with me, and I put forth all my powers; but it seemed as if I should never be able to speak a single sentence in a low key. Everything was tried, all sorts of experiments, and various kinds of vocal gymnastics as well. It must be borne in mind that I could not hear my own voice, and had nothing to guide me in trying to train and modulate it but my sense of feeling; and this sense of feeling had to be educated before I could trust it; and so for a long time I would not know whether I went right or wrong, except through being told of it by those who heard me. All the rest that I might learn would avail me but little, unless I could learn to pitch my voice properly. With what secret fears and heart burnings and impotent desires, and baffled efforts, worked on for months! The unavailing endeavor seemed to consume my life; but I would not give it up. My teachers very nearly did, however, although they had not yet spoken of it to me; when one day, in some inexplicable way, I struck the right pitch. The change was so sudden that the teacher who was with me could not at first realize that it was I that spoke. And there was great rejoicing over what seemed little short of a miracle, after hope had been abandoned. I do not mean to say that I spoke always thereafter with my newly acquired voice. Habit was too strong for that. But what I had done once I could do again; and at last I could analyze the way in which I did but pitch my voice at will. This was the great thing to accomplish, and I did it. Of course I needed constant reminding for quite a while afterwards, as it was necessary to use con-

stant watchfulness to prevent me from falling back into old ways, and in moments of excitement my voice would rise to the old shrill key and the false pitch, this artificial method of speaking, acquired by the deaf who cannot hear themselves, and have not been trained to regulate their voices by feeling in place of hearing. There was still a great difficulty to be overcome. I did not yet speak in a natural manner, but with a nervous haste, and talking fatigued me. There was a tightness across my chest; my breath failed me in the middle of a sentence. What was wrong? Here was another difficulty to be surmounted. For a long time it in turn baffled me—how to acquire that natural ease which would make speech a pleasure?

About this time Professor Alexander Graham Bell, who had but recently come to this country, was engaged to illustrate and teach the system of visible speech invented by his father, Professor Melville Bell, to us of the Clarke schools. My case, being a peculiar one, was brought under his notice. After observing me attentively for a time, he solved the problem. I talked while taking in breath as well as while it was leaving my lungs. And I was not at all conscious of doing this and did it in such a way that it was not easily discoverable by others. I had been doing it ever since I became deaf, and it was the chief cause of my hurried, inarticulate speech, and the tired feeling that I always had after talking five minutes continuously, and it had given rise to the idea that I had weak lungs, as it caused me to be very short-breathed. I was immediately set at practicing full and deep inspirations, and drilled in the habit of talking and reading only when the breath was leaving the lungs. At first this was most difficult to me to do, but I persevered, and it was the last great difficulty I had to overcome. I afterwards followed Professor Bell to Boston, whither he went to take private pupils, and received great benefit from his system of teaching. He taught me modulation and inflection, with other things that I needed to know. I afterwards, for some months, was in Mystic, Conn., where I had lessons from Zerah C. Whipple, now dead, who also had a system of his own. But I went to him principally to be in the country, on account of failing health, and for practice in lip-reading, more than for lessons in articulation; so while there I practiced what I had already learned rather than gained anything new. I thought his system was specially adapted to be used in teaching lip-reading to those who, like myself, had not time to spend over a more elaborate preparation for practice. My efforts at learning to know what others said from the motion of their lips was not so successful,

like my attempt at learning how to speak naturally, because it required the giving up a good deal of time to practice, each day, for years. I could not do this and at the same time pursue my literary work to advantage. The effort I made to learn to speak while working incessantly to keep up with numerous literary engagements, seriously impaired my health, so that the study and practice of lip-reading was more than I could compass at that time, situated as I was. I have no doubt that, had I been able to give it my time and thoughts, I might today converse readily, without the aid of pencil and paper, so tiresome to my friends. As it is, I am but half reclaimed from the disabilities of deaf-dumbness. But when I remember what additional happiness it has brought into my life to be able to speak freely and naturally, I can estimate what it would be to read with ease the speech of others upon their lips, and I would gladly take up the study and practice of lip-reading again were I so situated as to make it a success.

HOWARD GLYNDON.

At the age of nineteen, having already devoted herself to writing many poems, which later were published, Miss Redden turned her attention to editorial work on a religious paper in St. Louis, and contributed poems and miscellaneous articles to the St. Louis Republican, concealing her identity under the nom de plume of "Howard Glyndon." Possessing an intensely patriotic nature, imbued with the sense of right for the Union cause, her articles during the Civil War were vigorous and inspiring. Her criticism of the attitude of certain local authorities toward the Government caused an investigation to be made as to the name of the writer. Sarcastic stories ridiculing a "school girl" interfering with politics did not dampen her ardor, but rather tended to fire her enthusiasm and called the attention of the public to her ability as a writer and a patriot. Soon afterwards she was sent to Washington, D. C., as the correspondent of the Republican, and her articles and war poems were later published by Messrs. Hurd & Houghton of Boston. She also composed the words of a song—the fact that she had lost her sense of hearing accentuated her feeling of rhythm, and it was that which made her so gifted in expression of poetical lines—"Belle Missouri," dedicated to the volunteers from her State, which was a reply to "Maryland, My Maryland." It achieved wide popularity, and was adopted as the war song of Missouri, serving to arouse the dormant spirit of the Unionists.

During her stay in Washington, friendships were formed with such leaders as President Lincoln, General Garfield, General Grant, and statesmen of that period. It was her unusual opportunity to accompany General Grant to the front lines of the Union army—Civil War days women were seldomed privileged to go to the front—and the impression she carried home of the soldiers was engraven deep in her heart and memory. While living in the capital, Miss Redden compiled her interesting book, "Notable Men of the House of Representatives." It contains clever sketches and brilliant bits of description showing her gift to appreciate human nature and depict character.

In February, 1865, Laura Redden sailed for Europe, where she remained nearly four years, mastering the French, German, Italian and Spanish languages, and writing for the New York Times, New York Sun and the St. Louis Republican, and contributing to leading magazines. Part of her stay in Italy was devoted to collecting material for the United States Agricultural Department on the orange and silkworm culture, which was used in the final report of the Bureau of Agriculture.

A frail constitution did not prevent her from writing extensively, and her diary is filled with the personal impressions she had of the art galleries, of the literary lights she met, and of the beauty of nature as she viewed it in her travels.

While in France she visited the court of the Empress Eugenie, and enjoyed the hospitality and companionship of prominent men and women of Paris. Returning to New York, she continued her newspaper work, and added her name to the list of brilliant writers for Harper's, Putman's, Galaxy, and The Silent Worker. The Evening Mail and the Tribune were filled with her stories, and in leisure moments poems were voiced in exquisite tenderness. Introspective by nature, living in a hushed world, where no evil remarks were heard, frank in spirit, a real womanly woman, Laura Redden gave to the public gems of poetic art—bits of nature verse showing a keen appreciation of one who loves the great out-of-doors, tales of lovers filled with emotional intensity, lines overflowing with patriotic fervor, and poems which reflect years of study and intimate knowledge of the master minds. Her talent brought her into contact with men of letters, and her sunshiny disposition cemented friendships.

When the Clark institution was opened for the teaching of speech and lip-reading, in 1870, Miss Redden took a two years' course, and then became a pupil of Professor Bell of Boston, the inventor of the telephone.

While at the Whipple Home in Mystic, Conn., Miss Redden though pitched somewhat high, was refined in tone and distinct in quality. There was a certain hesitancy in speech which rather charmed than offended the ear. Her time was occupied with writing, so she never was able to master the technique of lip-reading, but she wrote long articles for the *New York Mail*, under the title of "Silent Children," advocating the teaching of speech in all schools for the deaf, and translated "*Memoirs d'un Petit Garcon*," under the title of "A Little Boy's Story," and in 1874 published her renowned "Sounds from the Secret Chambers." Press notices of her poetical works attracted interest. "Sounds from the Secret Chambers" is in a word a book that makes one feel as if he knew the author, and her readers can hardly help calling themselves her friends. Intensely subjective, it is while one reads as if a veil had been lifted, and we are looking by invitation into the sacred places of the heart.

Redden, Laura C.—"Sounds from Secret Chambers," by "Howard Glyndon, 16mo., pp. 197. To all who have the pleasure of knowing the fair authoress this collection will be more than welcome. Deprived of many of the pleasures of society, her mind has at last, like a spring hid beneath the green moss, found its natural outlet in the beautiful volume before us. The first and principal poem, entitled, "Sweet Bells Jangled," is life itself as we often see it, or as we make it; the story, truthful as it is, is well told, and indicates experience, or a quick perception which is the special peculiarity of Miss Redden."

Being of a versatile mind, the Mormon question appealed to her, and she devoted three years to gathering material for her book on this important public subject; but while it was in the hands of the printer it mysteriously disappeared.

In 1876 Miss Redden and Edward W. Searing, a well-known lawyer of New York, were married. The following clipping tells of that event and is of interest:

"The recent marriage at Mystic, Conn., at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. J. Lloyd Haigh, of Miss Laura Redden, the poetess, to Mr. Searing, a lawyer of this city, was a notable event in the literary world, worthy of further mention. The day was as lovely as the bride, and the event passed off beautifully. Miss Redden wore a white silk dress, high in the neck, en trainee, trimmed with white satin and real lace, the gift of Mrs. Dr. Kibbe of Louisiana. A beautiful wreath of orange blossoms and tulle veil completed the

costume. A wedding breakfast followed the ceremony. Among the many beautiful presents received were an exquisite set of china and silver spoons with monograms for cafe noir, and a check for a handsome sum of money from Mr. and Mrs. Haigh; an elaborate bronze card receiver from Mr. John Elderkin of the Lotus Club; and also a tortoise-shell fan, some very fine lace and exquisite painting on satin from Mrs. Fanny Bartlett d'Ovedio, formerly of this city. This lady was the heroine of 'The Diamond Wedding,' and is the widow of Senor d'Ovedio, and now resides in Cuba on her estates. Mr. John Greenleaf Whittier and Mr. Bayard Taylor sent autographed copies of their works. Mr. Whittier intended to be present at the wedding, but illness prevented. Letters and telegrams of congratulations were received from all parts of the country, among others from Joaquin Miller, Mr. Whitelaw Reid, Mrs. Mary Tales Peet, Mr. Strauss, late agent of the Associated Press of Havana; Mrs. Lillie Devereaux Blake, Dr. William Hayes Ward of the Independent; Mr. Auguste Boullier, member of the French National Chamber of Deputies, and the author of numerous historical and poetical works; Mrs. 'Jennie June' Croly, Colonel J. F. Dwight of Stockbridge, Mass.; Mr. and Mrs. George H. Story, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Moran, Dr. Mary H. Gilbert, E. Delafield Smith, Mr. Nelson Sizer, Mr. H. S. Drayton of the Phrenological Journal, and Mr. Gordon Grant, Vice-Consul at Geneva.

"The wedding tour embraced New Haven, Mount Holyoke, Northampton, Montreal, Quebec, Prince Edward's Island, Halifax and Boston. Mr. and Mrs. Searing are now at their country home in Sherwood, New York."

One daughter blessed the union—Elsa Searing, wife of John L. McGinn. Like her mother, she possesses a taste for books, a love of nature, and a patriotic spirit, which proved its integrity during the World War, when she devoted every moment of her time to war service, and afterwards concerned herself with civic interests, being the first woman elected as a member of the City Board of Trustees of San Mateo, as well as devoting three years' time to the presidency of the Women's Club, and being a member of many boards of directors of charitable organizations.

ELSA.

Oh, the world is a-brim with the sweetness of Summer;
The skies are deep blue, and the earth is dark green;
But the soft little cheek of this precious newcomer
Is dearer to me than all roses, I ween!

This soft little cheek, laid to mine, so long lonely,
 Makes the world seem bright as if all were new-made;
 For this shut human flower is for me and me only,
 To bring it to beauty, to watch lest it fade.

Lie close, little head, to the heart that you lighten!
 Cling fast, little hand, to the hand that you made strong!
 Intertwine, little life, with the life that you brighten,
 For the love of you brings back the secret of song!

Oh, my baby! my baby! there's much you must teach me;
 There are problems that only your dimples can solve;
 And 'tis only through you that my best good can reach me,
 As it is around you that my best thoughts revolve!

Ah, dear little feet! I must sit down below you,
 And try to unlearn all my trouble and pain,
 For what is there left of my lire fit to show you?
 My child, thou hast made me turn childlike again.

In 1886, Mrs. Searing came to California with the Convention of Instructors of the Deaf, and, finding the environment of Santa Cruz particularly adapted to the needs of her failing health, decided to make that her permanent home. "Hills of Santa Cruz" was inspired while living in that picturesque seaside resort. The poem has been described by Whittier as: "Fine in conception and felicitous in execution, it will cling to the Santa Cruz Mountain Range forever."

Friendships with literary men and women of the West began which gave joy to life in its twilight hours. When her daughter removed from Alaska, where Mrs. Searing had spent some time with her, to San Mateo, she found days spent in the lovely garden happy ones; but serious inroads were made upon her health, and the fragile flower of womanhood, administered to with unusual tenderness by an affectionate daughter, no longer cared for other companionship. She talked little, and ceased to write. Her last lines were prophetic and sad, and at the same time reflected faith sublime:

O hush thee, hush thee, heart;
 Lie still within my lonely breast;
 For soon shall come a time when thou
 And I shall be laid well at rest.
 There must be fairer fields for us
 Beyond the midsts of human ken."

(Her last lines, written April 5, 1908.)

Two grandchildren, Laura Edith and John W. McGinn, are left a heritage of rich treasure in memory of their grandmother, a poetess who gave much to the world, and to them in particular a legacy of refinement and artistic appreciation of the beauty of life.

TO HOWARD GLYNDON.

Dear soul that dost within a silence dwell,
Unreached by outward music, one who knows
How sweet with bitter on this silence grows,
Would ask if thou hast found it ill or well?
If it enfold thee with so calm a spell,
Thou wouldst not care to break it, and foreclose
The inner harmony that soulward flows,
For sound of ruder voices that repel,
And with their jar unclasp the links of Thought?
Oh, well for thee if fancies winged and swift
Bear thee above the shadow which had crossed
Thine outer life. Fate's hand in mind hath wrought
So few bright threads. I envy thee this gift
Which stars the solitude where sound is lost.
(1879.)

Written by M. A. H. Cramer to Howard Glyndon and published in her book, "Verses," 1899.

PART I.

SOUNDS FROM SECRET CHAMBERS.

“Sweet bells jangled and out of tune.”



Photograph of Author and her daughter, Elsa S. McGinn

PREFACE.

In letting these Sounds go abroad I hesitate whether to accompany them by that name which, adopted in a moment of girlish caprice, was fated to be one by which the world should know me best, or by that which is rightfully mine.

I remember that the one will represent me to some, and the other to still others, while a few know me by both.

The two names are typical of my double existence as a woman and an author.

In my double character I give my rhymes into the hands of—may I hope that I shall find the terms synonymous?—friends and readers.

LAURA C. REDDEN
("Howard Glyndon").

Boston, Mass., 1873.

SOUNDS FROM SECRET CHAMBERS.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

She sleeps; and roses round her clamber,
With bright red mouths and arms of amber,
Feeling for that red mouth of hers—
The sunshine breathless bends above her,
Toys with ringlets like a lover,
Thrilling and trembling if she stirs.

The veil she wears is woven lightly,
And thro' its folds her face burns brightly,
Like to a lamp thro' some soft screen—
Her breath just thrills the air around her,
And makes the silentness profounder;—
E'en so she sleeps, unheard, unseen.

Who comes with footsteps soft to wake her?
What sweet, what smiling slumber-breaker
Trips o'er the leaves in these green ways?
Whose strange face is the daylight sunning?
What white hand holds with tender cunning
The clue to this enchanted maze?

It is her prince, her lord, her stranger,
Who comes to her through doom and danger,
As ancient prophecies foretold:
The Fair, the Fortunate, the Fated,
He comes, he creeps, with breath abated,
And holds the key of magic gold.

The door springs open, he beholds her
Where on bright blush of rose enfolds her

Of rosy bloom, of gleaming rays;
He falters at the door, then blushing
He enters, voice and footfall hushing
In prayerful passionate amaze.

A moment pale as death he lingers—
Then lifts the veil with trembling fingers,
And swoons her lidded eyes to see!
He stoops, but ere his kiss is taken
She thrills, she trembles to awaken,—
Her eyes are opened quietly!

She starts not, for she knows the comer;—
In silent dreams through many a Summer
She hath beheld that shape of bliss;
She holds her arms out, blushing sweetly,
Surrendering her soul completely
To take his greeting, kiss by kiss.

O joy! the words of love are spoken,
Th' enchantment of the place is broken,
Gleam after gleam the glory breaks,
The palace gleams thro' every chamber,
The birds sing loud, the roses clamber,
And all Love's sleeping world awakes!

PRELIBATORY.

Gladdest of all is he who gives,
Discovering that his gift hath grace,
For passeth straight into his heart
The joy of the receiver's face.

If I could lift to longing lips
A beaker filled with drink divine,
Or sing to yearning ears a song
That should be welcomer than wine,—

I should not blush to lift my voice
 And bid each passer to my side;
 Nor, since I come unheralded,
 Shrink back, lest favor be denied.

But I have brought a little thing,
 And I am doubtful of its worth,
 And, at the last, am half afraid
 To show its nature clearly forth.

And if, despite my long delay,
 I only cheat expectant eyes,
 And you should give me formal words,
 Not glad, enthusiastic cries,—

Ah! lay it honestly aside;
 And I shall see my great mistake,
 But, knowing my intent was sound,
 I shall be patient for its sake!

Yet here and there a pensive smile,
 Or, dearer, an impulsive sigh,
 Shall pay me for the slights of those
 Who throw my offering idly by.

And haply, if a tear should fall
 Where some of mine have dropped before,
 Then I shall know one heart, at least,
 Has heard me knocking at the door.

But who will rise to let me in?
 And shall I be a welcome guest?
 A comrade and interpreter,
 When all my errand is confest?

I turn the key, I lift the lid,
 I lay the casket on the sill,
 And, wistful, linger at the door
 To know the tenor of your will.

SWEET BELLS JANGLED.

I.

A GIRL'S SUBTERFUGES.

"Wilt thou be an ancient maiden?"
 Say the matrons unto me;
 "Wilt thou have no chubby children,
 Clinging fondly to thy knee?"
 "Ruddy matrons! happy mothers!
 What are children unto me?"

"Wilt thou live alone forever?"
 Say the matrons unto me.
 Light I answer: "Who is single
 Should be ever blithe and free.
 Sober matrons! thoughtful mothers!
 Liberty is sweet to me!"

"Youth is scornful in the sunshine,"
 Say the matrons unto me.
 "Drop thy kerchief, boastful beauty!
 While thine eye is bright of blee,
 Age is lurking in the shadow,
 Age is creeping up to thee!"

And I answer, lightly laughing,
 What the matrons say to me:
 "I am given to Diana,—
 To the huntress, fair and free,—
 And the lumpy, lovesick Venus
 Hath no follower in me!"

I.

I am nineteen to day. I'm growing old.
I saw the merest phantom of a wrinkle
Between my brows this morning. Mother says
It is because I pore above my books
So late of nights; and Mother does not like
To have me different from other girls,
Except that I should show the freshest face,
The prettiest dresses, and the readiest smile.
And ah! how shocked she would be, if she knew
That I write poems sometimes,—nay, not poems,
But wretched verses; that I've even dared
To publish some of them. I signed them "Faith,"
And never was so flurried in my life,
Nor so exultant, as when first I saw
My rhymes—my very own—in black and white
For all the world to read; and not a soul
Had even the least suspicion they were mine!
I hardly know what I would like to be;
But then it is so grand to be a poet!
If I might be one! "God! how Art is long!"
Great Goethe says, and at his words I shudder;
For I have done no more than play at work.
Can I do more? Can I stand all alone?
I do not know, and there are none to help me.
If Mother saw me musing, she would say
Something in substance very much like this:
"Go to your music!" or, "Go take a walk!
I hate to see you moping. It is bad
For any girl's complexion. Do you know
That Edward Mason marries Mary Grey?
And she will wear white satin and real lace!
And you left school a year before she did,
And might have had him." Yes, that is the way!
Leave school, get married (just as well as buried!),
Have a fine house, and get one's life crushed out
In caring for it. Dust on the piano—
And no book opened,—never time to think!

Then the babies come?—Is that wan woman there
The merry, pink-cheeked girl I used to know?
She dies at forty years, or thereabouts,
And fades from memory as she fades from sight.
What has she done but drag herself through life?
And Mother wants that I should be like this!

II.

I'm sick of hearing so much about love!
I can't take up a magazine or journal
But 'tis the same old story,—Love! Love! Love!
Whether in poem, prose, essay, or tale;
And all my music's set to silly words.
There's too much harping on this same old string,
I'm tired of listening to it every day.
The boys and girls can talk of nothing else;
And 'tis the same with grown-up men and women.
I used to like such stuff when I was callow,
But now it palls upon me when I think
There are so many other things to talk of,
So many other things to think about,
So many more to pray for, do, and suffer!
And—stupidest of all!—if any woman
Dares call a man her friend, and treat him so,
Straightway around her rises a great babbling;
And all the babbling is of—Love! Love! Love!
Now, Clarence Dale has been my friend a year.
We've read together, walked and talked together;
Both understanding that we were but friends.
He's all the friend that I have ever had.
(I have no fancy for fine school-girl frenzies.)
Older than me he is, by several years;
Wiser than me he is, beyond compare.
He has the answers for my questions;
He helps me solve my problems, lets me lean
Upon his strength, and does not like me less
Because I am unlike the other girls.
He smiles—a little sadly—when I talk

Of the grand things that I would like to do,
But says a man should never try to hinder
A woman in her climbing,—rather help her.
Ah, how I bless and honor him for that!
How proud I am to have him for my friend!
And then to think that they should dare to talk
Of anything like Love 'twixt him and me,—
I can't endure to think of it a moment!

III.

HIS PICTURE OF HER.

She carries heaven wherever she goes;
An angel with hidden wings,—
She's sphered about with a sweet repose
That touches surrounding things.

You cannot look in her bonny eyes
But your thought will warm and stir
With a thankful thrill, in its glad surprise,
For the beauty born with her.

She's the mate of all that is sweet and pure,—
The birds, the stars, and the flowers,—
Her touch is delight, and her kiss a cure,
In this briery world of ours!

There's a light that lieth upon her grace,
Like the sun on far blue seas;
And her voice is as tender as her face,
And like the harp of the breeze;

And tender as either of the twain
Her shapely and supple hand,
The soother and sweetener of pain,
And the lily of all the land!

O, under her feet the roses bloom,
 Where only were thorns of yore!
 She's so bright that the shadow finds no room
 Where all was so dark before!

Till by Heartsease sown in this wilderness
 We reckon her years' increase;
 For she knows the ways of Pleasantness,
 And finds the path of Peace!

IV.

Sitting alone today, there came to me
 A thought that vexed me, like a flitting shadow
 That comes between us and the sun. It was
 "When Clarence marries, what becomes of me?"
 I shall not marry; but can I expect
 That he will keep like singleness of soul?
 They say fair faces wile men's hearts away.
 And yet I cannot think of him as married
 Without a twinge of pain,—I am so selfish!

V.

TRANSFORMATION.

"But then you take my friend from me!"
 She looked into his eyes;
 The shy, awakening womanhood
 Grown bolder from surprise.

"Who finds a lover needs must lose
 A friend, however tried!"
 "Choose you the lover or the friend!"
 His deeper voice replied.

The shadow of some coming pain,
 Of some mysterious ill,
 Hung round her young, uncertain soul,
 And made her falter still.

Ah! sweeter far to droop and dream
Above a love untold
And vaguely guessed, than when we count
What we may have and hold!

But this faint, lingering, strange regret
Her woman's heart construed
Into a longing for the ties
Of Friendship's graver mood.

"Ah! let me keep my friend," she cried,
"Whose gently guiding hand
Subdues my griefs and plans my joys,
With such serene command!"

"Mine is a man's impulse, and you
Are wiser in your way,
And cooler in your blood; but I
No medium course essay.

"Our lives must blend, or we must part,—
The fiat lies with you!"
She could not say, "Depart from me!"
For all that she could do.

"But I? I give you all," she cried;
"My life, my love, my soul;
The surety of my happiness
Goes into your control!"

An answering look, a clasping arm,
A passionate caress,—
Man's old reply to woman's words,
Nor yet believed the less!

VI.

He left me, slightly vexed, because
I made him promise not to tell,—

At least to wait till we should see
If all would work together well.

Because my mother does not dream
That we have thought of such a thing;
Not even though she saw today
Upon my hand another ring.

It is not what would please her best,
And I must try to smoothe the way;
And I must have some little time
To think of fitting words to say.

VII.

FOUND.

Sitting together only yester-even,
A hush fell on us with the deepening gloom;
To me it seemed as if the peace of heaven
Descended with the twilight in the room,
You drew my head down to your sheltering bosom,
And kissed the brow, so stirless in its calm;
And then my passionate thought burst into blossom
On glowing lips: "Unworthy though I am,
Love me, Beloved!"

The charmed world may lay her hand in blessing
Upon my young head's waves of sunny brown;
But I shall sigh for tenderer caressing,
And Love must plait the laurels for my crown.
If up the heights where gleams the golden glory
Of royal souls my woman's feet should go,
Think not these lips could then forget the story
Now gushing from my wild heart's overflow:
Love me, Beloved!

No, no! If in the clamor of glad voices
Blending my name with high, exultant song,

I missed the tone that most my heart rejoices.—
The very sweetest singer in the throng,—
I would not care to listen any longer;
You are all grace and melody to me;
And, leaning on your life, my life grows stronger,
Your strength shall nerve me for Eternity.
Love me, Beloved!

How tenderly you meet the mute appealing
Of eyes that ever seek to read your own.
This clinging trust—this wild excess of feeling—
But, dearest, I have been so long alone!
Henceforth there is no good beyond my grasping,
No splendor that my earth-life may not take;
The passionate heart which to your own you're
clasping
Is henceforth sacred for your princely sake.
Love me, Beloved!

VIII.

I have been poring over some old papers;
Some of my earliest writings,—school-girl things,—
And found this page, which reads like prophecy
In the full light that Love casts on today.
When I concluded to devote my life
To writing poems and to studying Greek,
I burnt a copy of it,—called it callow,—
And did not know that I had kept this one.

AVE CAESAR.

How shall I know thee when thou comest, my King,
Seeing that thou wearest not thy crown abroad,
Seeing that thou sendest me no token-ring,
And that no mark is on thy forehead set?
Ah! I shall know thee as my heart knows God!
And I affirm that thou art all for me,
As I thy queen and subject am for thee,

If that thou be not wrongly captive led
By any other woman's luring smile,
Nor lay on any other heart thy head;
If thou canst live thy life apart awhile,
Waiting to have it perfected by mine;
If so be thou canst bear this long, sharp cark
Which eats my heart as it consumeth thine,
While I go groping vainly in the dark,
Hoping to touch thy hand and find thee out,
And by thy love be robbed and wrapped about,
And crying like a newly orphaned child
Because I do not grasp thee anywhere.
Or like to one who is in sleep beguiled;
For ah! in dreams what will not fancy dare?
Be true to me, as to thyself thou'rt true!
Be true to me as I am true to thee!
Keep sacred all thy tender ways for me;
Keep the caresses of thine eyes for me,
And every thrilling hand-clasp, till I come,
Like one who staggers wearied toward home,
To hold my unkissed face up unto thine,
To feel thy strong life passing into mine,
Making me likewise strong, until my feet,
Like to my heart's responsive, steady beat,
Keep firm and even step beside thine own;
And we walk on together through the world—
Never, ah! never more to be alone—
With faces like unto the face of him
Whose life was haunted by a dream of treasure,
Which he went searching for throughout the earth,
Holding all lighter things of little worth,
Until at last he found it, one glad day,
Which it made sweeter than all flowers of May,
And took it up, and went his way with pleasure!

IX.

AN IDYL OF THE EARLY SPRING.

Oh! clear and calm and open as
The forehead of a sleeping child,
And blue and cool and far away,
The April heaven o'er me smiled!
The violets from their low, green homes
Peeped up, and patterned by its hue;
"We will be like the sky," they said,
"Forever pure, forever blue!"

Dropped through the branches of the beech,—
Unleaved and sear from wintry stress,—
The fervid kisses of the sun
Recalled the earth to blessedness.
And, startled from her long, white trance,
Abashed and scant'ly clad she lay;
Meanwhile the robin's glancing breast
Gave life and gladness to the day.

And where the creeping wintergreen
Its fruit in coral broidery weaves,
I found the sky arbutus hid
Beneath the crisp and russet leaves.
The fair patrician of the woods!
Their daintiest treasure,—pink and white!
As balmy as the myrtle flower
That sweetens the Italian night.

The vagrant brightness of the days
Had coaxed a freshness to the moss;
And many a brown and naked stretch
By maple blooms was blown across.
Like swarms of tiny wingéd things,
Clinging to branches bare and high,
Their tender scarlet clusters shone
Against the blueness of the sky.

There were mysterious bleams of white
Among the hollows, lying low,
Drooped over by dusk evergreens,
But I could laugh at April snow.
I knew its fostering mantle hid
The darlings of the coming May,
When constant Nature should fulfil
Her premonitions of today.

And sudden, silver sweet, I heard
A bluebird singing in the hedge;
Near by a venturous wood-flower sunned
Its whiteness on a mossy ledge.
Therefore I could no longer doubt,—
So much was plain to eye and ear,—
And, thrilled with sudden joy, I cried,
“The Spring, the pleasant Spring, is here!”

“But such a brightness never shone
On hill and dale and stream before,—
Or else my eyes were strangely dull,
And could not see so well of yore!”
That rogue, the bluebird, as I spoke,
Proclaimed my secret far and near;
Out of his merry heart he sang:
“Be glad! For Love and Spring are here!”

X.

This used to be a problem unto me:
Can woman's life hold Art and Love together?
And now I know it can! Not one heart only,
But one soul and one mind are shared between us!

XI.

I stood at early dawn beside my window,
So glad! so glad! His ring was on my hand,—

I could not sleep for the joy of feeling it,—
I leant out to the dim and dewy day,
And heard the first faint sounds of waking birds;
And saw the hills in shadow, and the deeps—
The blue, unsounded deeps—of restful skies
Unsunned above me. Then to me a voice—
A timid voice afraid of its own self,
A voice that sang the sorrow of a heart
That could not choose but suffer—floated up.
I caught the song, but could not see the singer.

XII.

A GIRL'S AFTER-SINGING.

When I was a wee white maiden,
I was my mother's delight;
She plaited my yellow tresses,
And she cuddled me close at night.
But once I woke in her clasping,
And felt that her arms were chill;
And they took me away from my mother,
Because she lay so still.
The buttercups shine in the meadow,
And her grave is wet with dew;
A sparrow is chirping near it,
Alas! what shall I do?

Love came, and sought me, and found me!
He entreated me passing fair;
It was for him that I braided
The jessamine into my hair.
He pelted me once with a rosebud;
When I stooped to where it lay,
He departed, and only left me
The flower that he flung away.
The bloom is all over the orchard,
While I sit here and sew;

So sorry for sweet Love's going,
Alas! what shall I do?

Pale Christ! I'll put thy betrayal
'Twixt me and my miseries twain;
Thou wert forsaken,—and I am
A motherless creature in pain!
Dead God! I will take thy pity,
And wrap it about my life;
O, let me be thy little one,
Since I'll be no man's wife!

XIII.

And it is well that I had wit
To counsel silence and delay;
And he has owned that I was right,
And things have proved it so today.

It is his father's wish that he
Should spend abroad at least a year,
Before he settles gravely down
Into a well-worn office-chair.

His cousin—he is Clarence too—
(I always quiver at the name;
And never can remember that
So many others have the same!)—

His cousin makes the tour with him;
But then he says that we shall go
When we are married; then he kissed
Away the sudden overflow

Of rebel tears that would not wait
Till I should find myself alone;
I thinking that he would be gone
Till next year's clematis was blown!

I know that all his friends would think
He would be wiser to go free;
And if the thing were known, he says
'Twould make a tedious time for me.

He will not have me set apart
Like pictures placarded as "Sold";
He is not jealous of the state
My unclaimed maidenhood can hold.

And, guessing some of her designs,
I sadly fear my mother's frown,
Since Robert Graeme has fancied me,—
For he's the richest man in town.

XIV.

BENEDICTION.

Good by, good by, my dearest!
My bravest and my rarest!
I bless thee with a blessing meet
For all thy manly worth.
Good by, good by, my treasure!
My only pride and pleasure!
I bless thee with the strength of love
Before I send thee forth.

Mine own! I fear to bless thee,
I hardly dare caress thee,
Because I love thee with a love
That overgrows my life;
And as the time gets longer
Its tender throbs grow stronger:
My maiden troth but waits to be
The fondness of the wife.

Alas! alas! my dearest,
The look of pain thou wearest!

The kisses thou dost bend to give
Are parting one today!
Thy sheltering arms are round me,
But the cruel pain hath found me.
What shall I do with all this love
When thou are gone away?

Ah, well! One poor endeavor
Shall nerve me while we sever;
I will not fret my hero's heart
With piteous sobs and tears..
I send thee forth, my dearest,
My truest and my rarest,
And yield thee to the keep of Him
Who blessed our happier years.

Once more good by! and bless thee!
My faltering lips caress thee.
When shall I feel thy hand again
Go kindly o'er my hair?
Let the dear arms that fold me
One last sweet moment hold me;
In life or death our love shall be
No weaker for the wear!

XV.

Gone for a year and a day!
I am like a bird that guards an empty nest,
And flutters in and out, and cannot rest,—
Gone for a year and a day!

XVI.

DRIFTING APART.

Out of sight of the heated land,
Over the breezy sea;
Into the reach of the solemn mist,
Quietly drifted we.

The sky was blue as a baby's eye
When it falleth apart in sleep,
And soft as the touch of its wandering hand,
The swell of the peaceful deep.

Hovered all day in our sluggish wake
The wonderful petrel's wing—
Following, following, ever afar,
Like the love of a human thing.

The day crept out at the purple west,
Dowered with glories rare;
Never a sight and never a sound
To startle the dreamy air.

The mist behind and the mist before,
But light in the purple west,
Until we wearied to turn aside
And drift to its haunted rest.

But the mist was behind; and the mist before
Rose up like a changeless fate;
And we turned our faces toward the dark,
And drearily said, "Too late!"

So, with foreheads fronting the far-off south,
We drifted into the mist,
Turning away from the glorious west's
Purple and amethyst.

For the sea and the sky met everywhere,
Like the strength of an evil hate,
And a thunder-cloud came out of the west,
And guarded the sunset gate.

Thou art in the royal, radiant land
That stretcheth across the sea,
And the drifting hours of each weary day
Take me further from thee!

XVII.

HALF AWAKE.

Sleep ravished me from pain, and laid a hand
Cool, quiet, and heavy on my smarting eyelids!
My soul fled from the clamors of the land,
Nor heard the distant portals close behind it.

When I awoke, the brightness of the day
Had slipped from off the green earth's tranquil
visage;
And in my darkened room I freshened lay,
And Ease had wrapped me in its welcome mantle

Befringed with cheerful thoughts, and fancies sweet
That it had gathered in the realm of visions,
Whilst I therein had walked with soundless feet
Over pale asphodels and poppies crimson.

Sometimes a lone bird in its darkened nest
Makes broken twittering before the dawning.
Perhaps a leaf, wind-stirred, has brushed its breast,
But its faint chirps are for its absent comrade.

Thuswise my heart lay half awake in me,
Before the mist of dreams had faded wholly,
And, stirred by half-reminders, groped for thee,
With drowsy calls and murmurous cries unworded!

XVIII.

A LOVE-LETTER.

All the day was dark and weary, freighted down
with shadows dreary.
Other shadows kept the sunlight from the threshold
of my heart;

Failure in its circle held me; by its mighty magic
spelled me.
Ere one hurt had ceased to rankle, some new
prickle made me start.

"Letters!" and I, wholly broken, turned in hopeless-
lessness unspoken:
"Doubtless, other stripes to smite me—Lord! my
soul is sore enough!"
Then I forced my hand to take them, but I scanned,
ere I would break them,
All the seals,—for I was growing cowardly through
long rebuff.

Till my spirit-broken seeming was enlightened by
the gleaming
Of a dear familiar writing, by a dearer hand devised.
When the arms that ache to hold us only may in
dreams enfold us,
What a blessing lies in letters then I wholly realized!

O my talisman in sadness! O my pledge of coming
gladness!
O my letter! tempest-drifted over briny billowed
seas!
For the sender's sake I bless you, for the sender's
sake I press you,
To my trial-chastened bosom,—be its comforter for
these!

Ah! I know whose letter this is! there's embalméd
freight of kisses,—
Not the weapon that I dreaded in your travel-
battered sheath.
You will feed my incompleteness, with your hived
board of sweetness,
When I peel away the cover and pluck out the fruit
beneath!

Yet my eyes with tears are filling,—my awakened
pulse is thrilling
To some far-off spirit signal; and I shiver, unaware,
As the wavelets of the river to the zephyr's kisses
quiver;
Is my darling thinking of me in the distance, over
there?

XIX.

Trouble on trouble! When he went away
It seemed as if my darkest hours began.
My life since then has been much like a day
Bright at the dawning,—very early clouded,—
I sometimes think the clouds will never lift!
First: father failed and we lost all we had;
And he was old and could not stand the blow,
And never tried to lift his head again
After our home was sold and we came here.
I never wore a black dress in my life
Till I got this one, and it seems so strange
That it reminds me every day of father!
I have no time to think about myself
Except of nights; and then I cannot sleep
Because of all my sore perplexity.
I must do all I can for mother now;
She can do nothing for herself at all;
But sits and rocks and moans and sighs all day,
Or holds my little sister in her arms.
And I am glad that I must think for them;
For had I time to sit with folded hands,
I think I should go crazy with the strain
Of all this waiting!

XX.

How long is it since any letter came?
Now that I think, 'tis full three months today.

I cannot hear a word of him by chance,
His father's house is closed,—they are away.

XXI.

The first, glad day of summer saw our parting;
Our hopes were vague our words were very few.
I murmured—from your passionate hold upstart—
ing—

“I'll wait for you!”

Ah, I was brave, and life was all before me—
My love should make it beautiful and true!
I said,—when passionate, parting pains came o'er
me—

“There is so much to do!
Come home! dearest, come home!

The summer waned and anguish fell upon me,
Such heavy loss as wears the strength away!
And for a time its greatness seemed to stun me;
And so I lay

Weak and bewildered, with one wish forever
Haunting my nights and darkening my days:
That I might fall upon your breast, ah, never
My head therefrom to raise!

Come home! dearest, come home!

A homesick child, lost in the dreary gloaming,—
Such lone estate is haply like to mine.
My eyes are weary waiting for your coming;

My sun is slow to shine!

Do you remember, dear, that charmed season
When your strong arm upheld my faltering feet?
When life was set to rhyme,—unchilled by Reason—
And O! so blissful, sweet?

Come home! dearest, come home!

The red-leaved glories of the ripening Autumn,
Sun diamonds flashing on a dimpling sea,

These pleased me once : these now I cast no thought
on,—

You are away from me!
And I am very weary of this sorrow—
Where are you? O my best beloved friend!
And must I ask tomorrow and tomorrow,—
And what shall be the end?
Come home! dearest, come home!

I know too well, unless some cheering token
Comes o'er the sea. I am not less than brave;
But want and doubt and toil, uncheered, unbroken,
Lead swiftly to the grave.
Yet you are dearer far to me than heaven;
And while you live, I feel I cannot die.
Pray the dear God will smooth what is uneven
And bring you by and by!
Come home! dearest, come home!

I live my life as you would have me live it
If you were here and earth were glorified;
For you will turn again, I do believe it,
And seek my side.
When you come home you'll find me worthier lov-
ing,—
Pain and endeavor keep us pure and true,—
And O, remember in your farthest roving,
I wait for you!
Come home! dearest, come home!

XXII.

NO LETTERS.

I say at morn, "I shall have one today";
I say at night, "I shall have one tomorrow";
But day and night go creeping slow away,
And leave me with my sorrow.

And is he sick? or is he dead, or changed;
Or haply, has he learned to love another?
If I could know him careless or estranged,
My pride, my love might smother.

Last night, indeed, I dreamed a letter came.
Ah! welcomer than any first May blossom!
And then I heard my mother call my name,
And hid it in my bosom.

And, cheated, woke, and heard the night wind rave,
And hid my wet eyes in my lonely pillow;
And dreamed again, and saw a nameless grave,
Half hidden by a willow!

XXIII.

Oddly enough, that which I care for least
Of all our trials, mother thinks the hardest.
True, we are very poor; and now we live
Away from town in such a tiny house!
At first it seemed like living in a trunk.
It is the merest shell, with rooms like closets,
And narrow hall-way and still narrower stairs;
And such low ceilings! But 'tis fresh and clean,
And almost pretty; and there is a garden.
My sister Kathie races round and round it,
And says it is a garden for a doll!
But we are quiet, and that pleases me;
And I am glad to work about the house,
And save our scanty store in many ways,
And make it go as far as well I can.
I think this no great hardship. I could lead
In full contentment such an humble life,
With love to sweeten it. But then my mother
Is never done with talking of past days.
And the few friends who still come in to see us
Have such blank faces, when their kind regrets

Are all cut short at seeing that I take things
In the most natural manner in the world!

XXIV.

NOT FOR SALE.

Come in from the desolate darkness,
Disconsolate heart of mine!
Come in from thy homeless wandering,
For a royal estate is thine!
Here is naught but a ring and a letter—
The key and the talisman—
To open the gates of that Eden land,
The fairest under the sun.
'Tis only the old, old story:
I am beloved, of all!
He turns from the roses, and stoops to take
The violet nearest the wall.
The princeliest heart and the proudest
Is lonely for want of mine,
Though queenlier brows may darken
When he pledges me over the wine.
So, heart, come in, thou truant!
For we have a cause to try.
Wilt thou go to this lordly master—
This wooer who bids so high?
He offers us gold and diamonds;
He offers us houses and land;
And all for a pledge of thy constancy,
And a bond of this poor little hand!
Thou art weary and very lonely,
O desolate pilgrim heart!
Thou art tired of living within thyself,
From love and pleasure apart;
Thou'lt be safely and warmly nested,
Though the wintry winds should blow;
So spring to the arms of a faithful knight,—
A lover, who loves thee so!

.

Alas! there cometh a shadow
 Between me and the light—
 A dear, kind face that for weary months
 Hath never gladdened my sight!
 How could I forget that these faithless lips
 Are sealed with a sacred kiss?
 How dare I to dream of another love,
 Whose heart hath been pressed to his?
 Dear soul! though a wall as high as heaven
 Should rise 'twixt thee and me,
 Though 'tween the hearts that fondly yearn
 Should flow a boundless sea,
 Still would I keep a stainless troth,
 And a free, unfettered hand,
 A loyal faith and a constant love
 For my lover, of all the land!
 So my heart stood up with a grievous cry,
 Saying, "I cannot go!"
 I may wander houseless and homeless,
 But thou canst not cheat me so!
 Ah, dear! It is weary wandering,
 For the heart that has no home!
 Ah, dear! It is weary waiting
 For the feet that never come!
 But I see not the gleam of my wooer's gold,
 Love maketh my eyes so dim;
 If I cannot be fair for thee, mine own,
 I will never be fair for him!

XXV.

I have sent him away: he comes back, and he will
 not be banished—
 He refuses to go!
 He forever is near me and round me, and hovering
 about me,
 And he teases me so!
 Does he dare still to hope for a "Yes,"
 Just because I am weary
 Of telling him "No"?

XXVI.

MY TALISMAN.

You took my hands in your two dear hands,—
O, but the night was a perfect night,
A sort of enchanted festival
Of music and flowers and light!—
You took my hand, and I was content;
But I did not know what your petting meant
Till I saw the ring on my finger.

But the secret was out when I saw my hand—
We never minded the night at all,—
It was only a little ring, you know,
But precious it seemed, for all:
So precious I've kissed it a thousand times,
And thought it deserved a thousand rhymes,
And so does your love for me, love!

And my hand? Why, it seemed such a different hand!
It didn't look like my hand at all!
My eyes kept seeking it all the time,—
So cunning and white and small!
'Twas all the work of that wonderful ring,—
'Twas a priceless and talismanic thing.
Did I thank you with eyes or with lips, love?

Not then, you know, for we sat in the glare,—
O, but the night was a perfect night!—
But I sat still in a trustful calm,
Wrapped in a deep delight,
Nestling warm and close at your side,
Looking up at you with a pleased pride,
And my heart was as blithe as a joy-bell.

I looked up at you and down at my ring,
And I blessed the night in my thankful heart,—
You were so noble and good and grand,

And we were no more apart!
Ah! how happy you made me, love!
As happy as any brooding dove:
I could doubt you no more forever!

Many a night I've gone to sleep
Caressing the hand that wears your ring;
For 'tis ever to me a new delight,—
A sacred and lovely thing!
'Tis long since I looked upon your face;
I hunger and faint for its tender grace:
The smile wastes off from my own, love!

"Even this too shall pass away!"
Was graven once on a monarch's ring;
But mine shall outwear my life, I know,
By my sick heart's fluttering.
But all the while that it slimmer grows,
And my cheek gets whiter, that once was rose,
You grow dearer to me, love!

Love shall endure, though the ring may wear;
I wait while the days and the months go by;
Days and years are the same to me,—
I am yours until I die!
If I never look into your eyes again,—
If Prayer and Patience and Pain are vain,—
They shall bury my ring with me, love!

XXVII.

TIDINGS.

And this is why he did not write!
And this is why he does not come!
And I have kept my troth-ring bright,
And sat and pined for him at home.

And would have waited fifty years,
Or would have died in maiden white;
And he will bring his bride with him,
For they have told me so tonight.

A Spanish girl with velvet eyes
And arching foot and supple nerves;
Rich lips that utter sweet replies,
And figure full of maddening curves!

What matter that my heart is true,
Since lips and cheeks are worn and pale;
And since my eyes are dimly blue,
What can my tenderness avail?

But it was weeping made them dim,
And I will sit and weep no more;
That ever I should weep for him!—
Ah! there's my mother at the door!

XXVIII.

Ah, cruel! cruel! cruel!
I cannot lift my heart from out this slough
Of dead, dank hopelessness. The whip and spur
Of kindling pride avail not. O great God!
Canst thou let such things happen? Canst thou let
One human trust another, as I did him,
And in the midst of trusting be betrayed?

Last night I saw him in my dreams;
So pale my heart was almost broken;
I read within his eyes the thought
His sad, sad mouth had left unspoken:
"I love you!"

In my sleep I said,
"And left me!" laughing bitterly;
And suddenly the phantom turned

And hid its pleading face from me.
But still around me, in my sleep,
"I love you!" seemed to stir the air;
To which I—laughing bitterly—
Made answer from my hard despair:
"Ah God! That I had never known
Such love as yours has proved to me!"

XXIX.

My mother cut me to the heart today,
By saying that I had it in my hand
To give back to herself and Little Sister
All the advantages that they had lost;
And that I would not!

XXX.

MY HOUSE UPON THE SAND.

Because the heavens were blue above,
Because the ocean was so fair,
In its far-off immensity
I built my mansion there!

"But know you not," a seer said,
"In storms those placid waves may rise,—
That cruel, treacherous, shining sea
May break its smooth disguise?"

"No! no!" my trustful answer ran:
"This sheltered spot it cannot reach;
Its waves will all their fury spend
Upon the lower beach."

And so I built, and shaped, and planned,
Until my house stood fair to view;
Long time my willing heart found work
For willing hands to do.

It was so dear,—so fair! so fair!
That little house upon the sand,—
It had not pleased me half so well,
Built on the solid land!

For here the white birds made their nests;
And here the sunshine stayed all day,
To burnish up the plummy crests
Of infant waves at play.

“Not yet, not yet its lord has come!
I deck it for him while I wait;
My heart keeps guard before the door
In honor of his state.

“And every time the sun goes down,
His feet are one day nearer home;
I count my rosary of hours
In patience till he come.

“And when his feet the threshold cross,
And when my hand is in his hand,
There will not be a happier house
In all this happy land!

“And I shall lead him through its halls,
And show him all its pretty rooms,
And nestle slyly to his side,
Amid the twilight glooms!”

.

The wind! The wind! The cruel wind,—
And ah! the hungry-mouthéd wave!
From out the wreck, one floating thing
I could not even save!

I stand alone upon the sand,
Bereft of all my heart's delight;
And look around and note the work
Of one black, bitter night!

My house! the fruitage of my care,—
The labor of my heart and hands,—
Cemented with my life's best things,
And—built upon the sands!

Gone—lost! for ever, ever lost!
And I am standing here alone.
Of all the riches of my house,
There is not left a stone!

And he, for whom the house was built,
Is turned away—and will not come.
The day is changed, and he is changed,
And I am pale and dumb!

I have no home in all the land,
No heart on which to lay my head.
Such rest as now I crave is found
In one low, narrow bed!

XXXI.

TEMPTED.

They will not let me rest,—I am so weary!—
My mother talks from morning until night
About this marriage she would have me make;
And he is kinder now than e'er before;
And sends me books and flowers; and will not
 slacken
His coming for my sharp, capricious moods;
And says I am more beautiful than ever,
And talks of how he loves me, while my heart
Is torn 'twixt love and pride and jealousy,—
I wish that I were dead and all were ended!

XXXII.

Well, let me look the truth full in the face!
I cannot part my living from my loving,
No more than I can take from off my finger
The ring he put there. For I tried today,
And could not do it. It was just as if
Some unseen hand withheld me.
I'll never see or speak to him again;
But I have ceased to lie to my own heart.
I love him! Let it be. But then I love him
As we do love the dead and out of reach!
I cannot write
Unless I write my heart out! Not unless
I use my tears for ink, my sighs for pens.
And who wants anything like this sad song
That sang itself together in my brain
Last night, while I lay chafing in the dark,
One throbbing mass of nerves, both eyelids propped
So wide apart I could not make them shut?
For, such revenges rebel Nature takes,
When suddenly deftly she slips from out
The long, strait-jacket we have swathed her in,
During formal days when formal looks are on us,
And makes reprisals for our tutoring!

XXXIII.

VIOLET TIME.

One morning, in the past sweet time,
The hand I loved and trusted most—
As tender as an olden rhyme,
That grieves for something precious lost—
Was sharply wrested from my own,
Although my truth was free from stain.
I had not learned to walk alone;
So, filled with wonder and with pain,
Childlike, I turned me, but to see

The heart where late my head reposed
Would prove no more a home for me,
Since heart and arms were coldly closed.
My feet were young and tender then,
Not hardened for the stony way,—
They'd only trod upon the flowers,
And on the velvet grass, at play,—
'Twas long before they learnt the skill
That deftly threads the thorniest road,
And finds a pleasant pathway still
Where rasher feet have bleeding trod.
Yet, O, young hearts that bleed and break!
Hearts with your first sweet hopes betrayed!
For your sad sakes my heart shall make
A shrine, where its first hopes are laid.
For your dear sakes my pride shall bow,
And reverent pity light my eye,—
Ah, violet time! so faded now,
Your angel long since passed me by!

XXXIV.

He lingers long away—so much the better!
I'm like a timid player perking for
A difficult part, in an unwonted dress.
Then let me have my time to get mine perfect,
So that he will not miss a single shade
Of the composure that I ought to learn.
His cousin, talking near me last night, said
They should not look for him for months to come.
It is his health that calls for longer stay.
His health? Indeed, I cannot comprehend.
With love and everything to make him happy,
'Twould be more natural that he should be well!
I caught no word of his fair foreign wife,—
Indeed, I hardly ever hear his name,
Nor go where I can hear it, since his friends
Are hardly mine.

XXXV.

SURMISES.

His love I measured by my own,—
Alas! the heart of man,
So swift to thrill,—so swift to change,—
Crowds years into a span!

The strongest fires burn soonest out,—
And he could thus forget!
And only pities me sometimes,
Because I love him yet!

Ah, well! I fear 'tis often so;
The man will go his way,
And count his gains and freight his ships,
Forgetting but today!

But woman? she must gather up
Her hopes—those brittle things—
And all her work is to undo
Her life from where it clings!

XXXVI.

We are so very, very poor, indeed!
What will become of us? Until I tried,
I thought it would be easy to find work;
And now I say, "God help the struggling poor!"
I never fully pitied them till now.
With all I know, I cannot earn a cent!
I write and write, and send my work away,
And all comes back to me with brief regrets,—
Story or poem, it is all the same.
Ah! I perceive that fingering of the lute
For our pleasure is a different thing
From singing songs to earn our daily bread!
Poor mother cried herself to sleep last night.

XXXVII.

Well if I,
 Being so unhappy, have it in my power
 Out of my misery to make these others
 In their ways happy; have I any right
 To listen to my heart, whose full consent
 I know that I shall never, never gain?
 Either way, my day is clouded. I'm so little worth,
 What matter if I give myself to bondage?
 My life is no good to me any more,—
 Then let it be of some good to others!
 They may make a bridge of me and walk across it
 Into the kingdom of their hearts' desire!
 I should be glad of this; but I've forgotten
 How to be glad of anything; and I
 Am far too weary; and I only ask
 That they should leave me quiet with my grief,
 When I have promised everything they wish.

XXXVIII.

I took my pen today and could not write.
 My grief has drained the fountain of my thoughts.
 Alas! of such poor stuff are made no poets.

XXXIX.

It is to be!
 Last night he followed me
 Out into the dark and dewy garden walk!
 So still the place,
 I, seeing not his face,
 Caught every least vibration of his talk.

He did not know
 How sadly, long ago
 My heart had forgotten to thrill to passionate words.
 Nor understand
 That never another hand

Might wile responses from its slackened chords.
 I, sitting pale,—
 The darkness for my veil,
Like one, who, kneeling at the water's side,
 O'er the surge's roar
 Hears from the further shore
Far words, borne faintly forward o'er the tide,—

 In silence drooped,
 Until his head he stooped
So near, I felt his breath upon my cheek.
 The old, old pain
 Woke suddenly up again;
It was for memory's sake—not his—I did not speak!

And while he bent above me, all at once
The moon came forth and lighted up the place;
And ere I was aware, his face became
An awful revelation unto me,
Because it showed me how his love was set
Upon me—like the tides of some sad sea,
That spend themselves upon a cold gray shore,
And spend themselves in vain, and still return;
And still return in vain, and will not cease
From circling about the sullen shore!
And in the simile I read our fates:
He was the sad sea—I the sadder shore!
But when he yearned towards me—when he moved
To draw me to his bosom, all my heart
Within me sickened; and I lifted up
A faltering hand—my shield 'twixt him and me—
And laid it on his shoulder, while I spake,
And while I trembled very grievously:
“I have no heart to give you. If I had,
I do believe it would be yours of right,
Seeing how you regard me. Pity me,
Because I cannot love you; and forgive—
Because I am the source of all your pain!”

"You have no love to give me; May I ask
If you have given it to another man?"
From out the depths of my despair I moaned,
"Be merciful, and do not question me!"
"Only once more!" he urged; and I could see
His face was ashen, as of one who staggers,
Death-sick, beneath a weight he cannot carry;
"And O, forgive me! Does he live, this man?
Or is he dead?" And then his searching eyes
Devoured my face in silence.
"He is dead,"—
I would have said—"to me"; but a strong pang
And then I felt his kisses on my hands.
And he was saying: "Oh, my heart's delight!
Let me but love and tend you in your need!
I will be very patient—will not ask
That you shall love me, till I teach you how!"
He held my hand so that the moonlight fell
Full on the ring that Clarence kissed and placed
Upon my finger, kissing both again.
"May I wear this," I said, "beside your ring?
I cannot take it off."
He turned his face away before he spoke;
Then said: "Do as you will,—
But let me love you!"

XL.

INTERPOSITION.

A bride! But not a wife! there came
A message flashing o'er the wires:
"If you would save your house from shame,
Be here before the month expires."

He had but time to kiss my lips
And strain me strongly to his breast,
And leave me mistress of the place
Which late I entered as a guest.

And he must travel night and day,
Nor slacken till he numbers ten;
And it will be a month, at least,
Before he comes to me again!

XLI.

A week had passed since he whose name I bore
Had left me. I was glad at need to have
A fair excuse for shutting out the world;
And doubly thankful for the short reprieve
His absence gave me, ere my strange, new life
Began in earnest. On this sunny morn
I felt my heart drawn towards the little house
Where yet my mother lingered, though preparing
To give it up and come to live with me.

There was a bench beneath a cherry-tree,
Which now I knew must be one cloud of bloom.
I thought that I should like to sit an hour
Upon that bench, and let the sunshine warm me.

And so I left my grand new home and went,
And kissed my mother; while our Kathie clung
About me, in her small impetuous way,
And followed me into the budding garden,
To show me where the blackbird had his nest,
And presently forgot me in her play.
So then I sat and watched the bustling bees;
And with the sounds and scents there fell upon me
A half contentment; and I put my hands
Together quietly, and softly thought
Of all the many things that I would do
In expiation of my one great lack,—
The lack of love for him who loved me well!
“But I will be so kind, so kind!” I said,
“And never cross or vex him any way;
And try and make him happy; and who knows
But God will smile upon my sacrifice,

And let me find my happiness at last
In giving up my will to other wills!"
And then the tears that spring, but do not fall,
Stood gently in my eyes. I think it was
My heart's protest in favor of itself,
Or some unheeded impulse of self pity.
But through these tears I saw a sudden shadow;
And lifting up my eyes—there stood before me
The same pale Clarence of my warning dream:
Only, his pallor did not plead, but threaten!
I saw the coming tempest in his eye,
But could not comprehend. "How came you here?"
I no word more could say from out my stupor.
"It is your fault," he said; "I did not know—
Until I came. I went to Locust Grove;
Found it deserted; but a neighboring gossip
Spoke of your father's death, and thought your
mother

Was living here. I did not catch your name
Until I saw her; then she told me all.
(As she would tell it to some chance acquaintance!)
And bade me come and see you in the garden!"
"And you!" I said, as one who talks in dreams,
"How did you dare to come? Why have you come?"
And as I spoke I put my hand before me,
The back towards him, and the two rings gleaming
Upon the wedding finger, with no thought
Of anything except to keep him off.
He saw his ring upon my hand, and started
Fiercely—as if to strike me. "How dare you
To wear your troth-ring when your troth is broken?"

"If it was broken, 'twas not first by me";
I answered swiftly; "and of all the world
You are the last one who should dare to taunt me;
Because, in spite of all that you have done
To turn my heart against you, it was weak
And spiritless, and clung to its old fealty,

When hope was dead and love was almost crime,
And would not let me fling this ring away!"

"In spite of all that I have done!" he cried;
"What have I done but love you night and day,
Through silence and long waiting and despair,
And ill reports and sickness? And you ask
Why I am here? I came for love of you!
What else could bring me? O my God! my God!
I can't believe it! Are you this man's wife?
How could you turn against me without cause?
Who slandered me? Why did you cease to write?
When first your letters did not come I wrote
And wrote again, and would not be rebuffed.
And then in Naples I was smitten with fever,
And could not write, since I was ill for weeks.
When I was strong enough to read my letters,
The first one that I took was from my sister;
And in the midst of other idle gossip
I saw your name. She wrote that Robert Graeme
Was courting you. And I fell back and read
No more that day,—and not for many days!
And just as soon as I could leave my bed
I turned straight homeward"; here he clutched a
tree.

"Ah! better far if I had stayed away!"

"I heard that you were married." "I!" he said;
"Ah! now I know you never loved me well!
Else you had not believed it, save from me,—
It was my cousin Clarence!"

And then I
Recalled to mind how mother had come in
From church one Sunday evening, and had told me
That she had heard young Clarence Dale was mar-
ried,—

His bride a Spanish girl, and beautiful.
And while she talked, a friend of ours dropped in,
And said the same thing over; and I never

Stopped once to think about that other Clarence!
(They called him oftenest Clarence L., to make
Ditinction 'twixt him and his senior cousin.)
And I, made conscious by my well-kept secret,
Dared ask no questions; tacitly accepting
The tidings as they came, and shaping them
To meet the strong forebodings of my heart!

Now I began to see what I had done,
And, suddenly, resolved to know the worst,—
Like one who, driven toward a precipice,
Which he conjectures, though he cannot see,
In sheer despair goes forward to the brink,
And parts the green mask of the undergrowth,
And looks straight into the dizzying ruin
Which gapes to gulp him,—
“And you wrote?” I cried;
“I got no letters after the first month.”
And then I saw the wonder in his eyes,
While he was saying: “Why, I wrote and wrote,
Unmindful of your silence; sending all
To the address you gave me!” And then I
Cried out at once, “But the address was changed!”
“You did not write me so.” “Indeed, I did!”
“Well, then, I got no letter. I suppose
That mine have gone where all dead letters go,
In our well-ordered service of the post!
Dead letters! Aye! For they are dead indeed.
To us they're doubly dead. But had you waited,
I might have told you all that there was in them,
And we had smiled, saying, ‘No great harm is
done’!”

Now when I thought of all the bitter days
And bitterer nights those letters would have saved
me,
Though his reproach was just, I could not bear it.
And with no word that could express my pain,

I dropped my head between my trembling hands,
And the great deeps of woe were broken up!

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XLII.

AWAKENING.

There is no hope for us in all this world,
Nothing to do but part!
I give up every hold on life and love
When I resign your heart!

It is too late, too sadly late, to meet;
So touch my hand and go;
Come never near me with those fatal eyes
That pain and thrill me so!

Come never near me! 'Tis my only plea,—
Depart! Leave me alone!
Lest every worldly tie my spirit break
And claim you for my own!

Away! away! I hold my passionate heart
Beneath a feeble hand.
How love and pain are wrestling for my life
You may not understand.

Why did you come to darken all my fate
With hopeless, fond regret?
Why should the sunrise glory of my soul
So early fade and set?

Forgive me; soothe me with a tender touch,—
But one, before we part.
I may not even ask you, O my friend!
To wear me next your heart.

I am not quite so selfish in my love,
So senseless, so unjust,
Forget; and be your noble self again,
And true to every trust.

I must not let you love me, tenderest friend!
Forget; be glad again!
I want to give you all the joy of life,
And take the lonely pain.

Too late to meet, because one sad mistake
Had come between two souls!
We may but clasp reluctant parting hands
Across the gulf that rolls

Between our lives—God! is it kind or just?
But I am mad with pain,
And all the teachings of a prudent lore
Fall dull upon my brain.

Let me lean on you for a moment's strength,
While I accept this cup.
My life's one love! my heart is broken now,
Else I could not give you up!

I am as one who passes from the heart
Of some great storm into the silent dark;
For grief is not less grief because it broods
In stillness o'er a fate which first awakened
But breathless writhings and despairing cries.
I hardly know what happened at the last.
He was upon his knees beside me pleading
For love as if for life. "You are not his!"
I heard him say. "In the face of God and man
I claim you. Leave him! Let me act for you.
Why should we care for what the world will say?
What is the world to us, if we are right?
Are we not all the world unto each other?"

And I, 'twixt sobs and shivers: "Go! go! go!
For I should break my mother's heart and his!"
"Then you will rather break your own and mine?"
"Not yours! not yours! Go and forget me,
Clarence!

For I deserve from you no such thing.
O, I will pray to God that this may be;
Even as I asked Him once to let you love me!
Leave me alone to suffer for my fault.
Go and forget so mean a thing as I!"

"And have you read your heart and mine so little
As not to know one pain must thrill us twain,
One fate must smile or darken over us?
In life or death we cannot be divided,—
Ore spirit moves us, one desire invades us.
I will not touch you while you bear his name,
So fear me not; and for your sake—not his—
I give all honor to this worthless bond.
But break it! See, my arms are waiting for you!
One hour of courage, and the worst is over!
I dare not stay,—I cannot trust myself,—
I go and wait until you call me back.
O, shame me not by any faltering!
Great God! to think this man should have my
right
At his disposal! Free yourself of him,
Or I shall kill him!"

Then my mother's hands
I felt about me,—and I knew no more!

XLIII.

TWO LETTERS THAT WERE NOT SENT.

I.

O the long pain of faithful hearts!
By fate unconquered, how they yearn!
If strong, they bear an aching life;
If weak, they break, yet, breaking, burn.

With ventures wrecked, with love denied,
With pain's fruition long delayed.
While o'er the waste of future years
I glance and turn away dismayed.

The fierce regret for what is lost,—
The deep, undying tenderness!
The hatred of unworthy self,
With no sustaining, fond caress!

And all the glory gone from life!
And all the earth so dull and cold!
The bitter nights! the dismal days!
The suffering that maketh old!

But you are mine,—forever mine!
For soul will seek its kindred soul;
I send you from me, but my heart
Will never own my will's control.

I have no fear of broken faith;
If I have doubted, that is past;
I know you noble,—'tis the false
Who find forgetfulness at last!

I am not worthy to be loved,
And our eternity is sure!
My penance is this lonely life,
But I am faithful to endure;

II.

Well! and the busy day is done,
And I am alone at last;
Only myself to please tonight,—
But O, to forget the past!
Because I cannot, I never shall care
To know I am fair again;
Because I cannot, these weary nights
Have shrivelled my life with pain.

For my soul goes out with a cry for you,
Trying to find the way
Out of this gloom, where the shadows are,
Into the perfect day.
My soul goes out with a cry for you:
“Come back! for I die of loss,
And there is no strength in my crippled life
To carry this cruel cross.”

O, my soul is forever calling to you,—
Crying and calling in vain,—
Weeping and wailing and calling to you,
Till living is only pain.
It is harder than death to feel and to know
We must each walk a different way,
And the fate that is walling me out of your life
Grows stronger from day to day.

And often I think I would gladly lie
Down in my winding-sheet,
Rather than battle and struggle alone,—
Rather than lose you, my sweet!
But I know I'm too young and too strong to die,
Too brave for a coward's part;
But what shall I do with my empty hands?
And what with my haunted heart;

I know there is work for willing ones,
And I offer my sacrifice,—
Living henceforth outside of myself,—
Though the penance may not suffice.
Sometimes my name will mix with the sounds
Floating over your busy life,
And I know that my face will haunt you then
One moment amid its strife.

But, love! my dearest! this hopeless loss
Has smitten my soul to its core;
Naked and bleeding lies the life
So strongly rooted before.
I stretch my arms through the pitiless void
To find you, wherever you are;
And I shiver and pine in this desolate waste,
Since you are forever afar!

XLIV.

THE MEANING OF A SIGH. (HIS.)

My soul is invaded by many thoughts
Of thee, of thee!
Like the sweet white buds that fall in spring
From the citron-tree.

Ah! if my arm were under thy head,
On thy lips my lips,
What should we care for the cruel past,
Its cheats and slips?

XLV.

UNTIL THEN. (SHE.)

We shall meet no more—no more—
In all the pleasant places of the earth;
And yet thy seal is on me, and thy feet
Shall hardly keep from following after mine!

We shall meet no more,—no more!
 But in the silent watches of the night
 Thy heart shall hear the calling of my heart,
 And in my sleep my face shall be toward thee.

We shall meet no more,—no more!
 And I shall only speak thy name to God,
 But in my memory thy face shall wax
 More beatiful and dearer, year by year.

We shall meet no more—no more—
 Till some glad day I fall upon thy neck—
 The world being past—and tell me, without tears,
 How life was but a groping after thee.

XLVI.

Alas! alas!

He has come back,—pale, travel-worn, and haggard;
 For he has hardly rested night or day,—
 He stayed not one hour longer than the needs
 Of a vast business (whose prosperity
 Hung on his coolness and his skill) required.
 And he was wild to see me, and I shrink
 From his caresses,—would not yield my lips
 To his, was nearly frantic when his arms
 Enfolded me. And silence fell between us.
 He left me free; and, looking in his face,
 I saw that I had hurt him to the quick.
 O heart of me! my punishment is heavy.
 Make it not heavier than my soul can bear;
 Be generous, God,—not just!

She's mine! And yet she is not mine!
 I dare not touch her with my hand.
 My wife! and yet no more to me
 Than any stranger in the land!

XLVII.

ALONE WITH THE NIGHT.

Ye shame me with such beauty, placid skies,
Cloud-broidered and thick-set with holy stars!
I turn away my hungry, tearless eyes.
Ah! how ye shame the human's fleshly wars,
And spirits chafing behind prison bars.
I dare not shake this silence with vain cries,
Nor brave thee, Nature! in thy vestal worth.
Shrinking, disfigured, guilty soul, stand forth!
—If so thou canst amid these sinless things,—
Forget thy ruined Paradise on earth
To list the song God's first created sings.

But lovely art thou yet, thou glad, green world!
O winds, with music-laden, odorous wings,
I scarce dare weight ye with these utterings!
Thou, my crushed heart—not altogether vile
Since such strange pain sweeps o'er thy quivering
strings,
Since thus responsive to the plea she brings,
Thou meetest Nature's messages half-way—
Though all around thee lie the shadows gray,
Though sunk in night the gleam of life's young
day,
Canst thou not burst and cast thy bonds away?

XLVIII.

'Tis terrible,—the life that we are leading,
And I begin to fear him. . . .
He grows so jealous, moody, and suspicious,
As if the very heart were changed within him.

LXIX.

LIVING APART.

All day I go the round that 'customed feet
Have shaped and hardened so,
I read, in brightening eyes, how life is sweet
When love's June roses blow.

With quiet hands I do my daily task,
And wonder at this calm;
And wonder if the peace I dared to ask
Comes dipped in Lethe's balm.

Till some chance word, some faintest memory-flash,
Brings one forbidden face.
The past, the present,—how they war and clash!
One's pain, one's tender grace!

I can keep down the swelling of my tears
Through all the busy day;
But then the bitter nights!—to think for years
I may not put away.

This face, which, finding not, my longing eyes
Seek in each crowded street;
Low welcomes, of which memories arise,
I spring no more to greet.

How shall I live? It haunts me everywhere,—
This face,—and yet "No more!"
Is written on the future, foul or fair,
And hope, not love, is o'er!

L.

I can no longer bear it,—I will speak
And tell him all tonight, though he should
Kill me.

LI.

WHO KNOWS?

If she had not found him so cruelly cold and so
narrow,
And if, when she laid her white cheek on his shoulder
and shivered,
He had not burst out with a gibe, which went home
to her heart like an arrow,
Who knows but from all that came after they had
been delivered?
But he knew that her heart was not his, and he
had a suspicion
That she meant to make duty stand forth in the
place of true loving;
And her kindness was worse unto him than its total
omission,
Since he made it avail him his doubts of her fealty
in proving.

I did not dare to tell him after all.
For the first time, he cruelly repulsed me.
Default of kindness, my weak lips were sealed;
I went unshrived unto my lonely pillow.
I meant to tell him all, and ask his counsel,—
Leave him the right to judge and sentence me.

LII.

It is not to be! I feel it is not to be!
I have made a path, but cannot walk in it.
Nor will I vex myself with longer trying.
I wrong all three by this deceitful silence,
Will make all three unhappy if I carry
The falsehood further. He will grow to hate me.
Worse could not be. So I must dare to leave him.

LIII.

A WOMAN'S HEART.

Chief contradiction of all contradictions
A woman's heart!
In the same breath she saith "Cleave unto me!"
And then "Depart!"

And when the words are said that send you from her,
With what a start
The poor, fond thing revokes her "Nay!" to nestle
Upon your heart!

LIV.

REVOCATION.

Come back! come back! for the light went out
When thine eyes looked away from my own!
Grieved and weary, I wander about,
So tired of being alone,
So faint and friendless, away from thy side,—
Come, dearest, and take my hand;
Forget that its clasp was ever denied
To the tenderest one in the land.

Come back! come back! with the spring's sweet prime
With the birds from over the sea;
For I turn mine eyes from the sunlit time
And my ears from its melody.
For my soul, in its need, cries out for a day
Ere my heart fell away from thine,—
Cries out for the cup that I pushed away,
Spilling its golden wine!

Come! and thy look shall kindle again
The faded flush of my cheek,—
Come! and read in my eyes the pain

That my lips are too proud to speak,—
Come! for my heart at thy mercy lies,
Stabbed with a yearning wild.
All for thee! and for thee it cries
Like a poor little frightened child!

LV.

And having made up my mind to the worst,
I found my heart was lightened of its load.
"It will be terrible for him at first;
But he will see the utter hopelessness
Of any good from such a tie as ours,—
Nay more, that I should sin and he would sin
In living together, seeing that I love
And am beloved of another man.
I will acknowledge all my wickedness—
For weakness is a sin in such a case—
In that I let myself be overborne
By worldly counsels and belied my heart.
I will be patient, speak he e'er so harshly—
For I deserve the bitterest rebukes,—
But I will sin no further. I will break
From this unholy tie at any cost,
Even though he curse me for it. Well I know
That scandal will be busy with my name,
And all my summer friends will quit my side,
And my poor mother!—that hurts worst of all!
But I must bear it, since I do deserve it.
And I will go away and hide myself,
And let the world forget me. By and by
We two may come together, and then life
Will just begin for me. I cannot think
That this is wrong, because we love each other;
Only 'tis hard that three must suffer first,
The guiltless with the guilty, all because
Of my wrong-doing."
Thus I planned the future.

LVI.

My heart! why wilt thou be so sad?
Have we not had our fill of sorrow;
Can I not bribe thee to be glad,
Or think a little of tomorrow?

LVII.

BECAUSE OF A LETTER.

I.

"Darling!" he wrote,—and then before his eyes
There came a sweet and gracious woman's face,
And in his ears a voice whose low replies
Were all denials one while in the past.
But when we love how can resistance last?
And when we love we will not any more
Give heed to things that moved us much before.

II.

So he wrote "Darling," and perhaps he kissed
The little word for lack of kissing her
Upon the gentle hand, which his so missed,
And on the mouth that waited ripe for him,
And on the eyes, sweet, though with weeping
dim,—
And no presage of those other eyes
Which should the letter on its way surprise.

III.

Ah, little herb, with which Titania's lids
By spiteful Oberon were rubbed so well!
When lovers love, and all the world forbids,
What wicked fairy culls you for their bane,
Making them blind to all the world's disdain,

Letting them see but one another's faces,
And only those in very crowded places?

LVIII.

OPPORTUNITY.

And while his soul was full of hate,
And while his brow was dark with wrath,
He lifted up his eyes and saw
His rival standing in his path.

And maddened at the radiant face,
And at the calm, triumphant air,—
To think the very man she loved
Should dare to stand before him there!

LIX.

ONE MOMENT.

The devil that hides in the heart of every man
Leaped suddenly out of its hiding-place in his.
And then, in the breadth of a little moment's
span,—
For it takes no longer to kill than it takes to
kiss,—
The thing was done that never can be undone:
One was standing up and the other lying stark;
And a woman, sitting and musing in the sun,
For a moment wondered the day should turn so
dark!

LX.

PRODUCED IN COURT.

But now I wonder if this man who wrote
 Could have foreseen the things that were to
 come,
Would not the heart within his breast have smote
So sore upon him that this faded note
 Had never left his hand beyond recall,
 Fixing the fate of three for once and all?

Would he have said, "Ah, love so fair and sweet!
 Die now. 'Tis better thou shouldst die than I.
'Tis better thou shouldst die than she should live
To beg of death what life no more could give"?
 Would he have tossed this letter in the fire,
 And turned the key on passionate desire?

Or, standing up, have faced the worst and said,
 "Through all annoys I go to make her mine.
I'd rather she would kiss me, when I'm dead,
And plant pale-hearted roses o'er my head,
 Than live to pass me on the other side.
 Life is too cheap if heart's bread be denied!"

What is impossible to him who loves?
 Nothing but this,—to force Amen from God.
And not the faith for which the mountain moves
Can thrust effect out of its natural grooves.
 If love could put all life in one strong kiss,
 It could not cure one little wound like his!

LXI.

UNTO THIS LAST.

I.

Have I not borne
The trials of an adverse fortune well,
Giving no sound by which strange eyes might tell
Of the sore heart within?

II.

Have I not seen
The hands that should have helped me turned away,
Leaving me, sole, to bear this bitter day
In my own strength alone?

III.

My failing hand
From the sweetest aims of life had loosed its hold;
Peace left me as I grasped her garment's fold,
And came not back again.

IV.

Not this! not this!
Why leave for me this last drop in the cup,
So deathly that I cannot drink it up
Without a quivering lip?

V.

God! God!
This proud, high heart is bare before thee now!
Low in the dust I lay my defiant brow.
I did not know of this!

VI.

I'm conquered now!
The waves go over my defenseless head,
My vaunted strength is gone, and in its stead
Sitteth a white despair.

VII.

Life is so dead!
And the Hereafter, all untried and new,
So tempts me now, that all I want to do
Is to hide myself and die.

VIII.

Look on me, Thou!
To whom I turn a still and fearless face
I have no prayer to move thee in thy place,
But—thou art Just!

LXII.

OUT OF TUNE.

O, bear with me, for I am mad!
I cannot look upon the skies,
I hate the looks of friendly eyes.
What awful things doth God devise,
In spite of all our piteous cries!
I cannot tell the night from day,
I know not good apart from bad,
I know not what is sad or glad,
Nor if a wish I ever had.
Forgive me, God! I'm worse than mad!
Forgive! I know that I, myself,
Am the sole cause of all my pain.
Have pity on my broken heart,
Have pity on my wretched brain!

It crisps, like deserts void of rain,—
I think I ne'er shall weep again.
Forgive! Have pity on my pain!

LXIII.

There is no sweetening for the lonely lips
In thoughts of long past kisses; no delight
In tracing out a face forever vanished
Upon the sombre canvas of the night!

LXIV.

A LATER MOOD.

The sheep are sheltered in the fold,
The mists are marshalled on the hill,
The squirrel watches from his lair,
And every living thing is still;
The fields are gray with Immortelles!

The river, like a sluggish snake,
Creeps o'er the brown and bristly plain,
I hear the swinging of the pines
Betwixt the pauses of the rain
Down-dripping on the Immortelles!

And think of faces, slimy cold,
That flinch not under falling tears;
Meek-mouthed and heavy-lidded, and
With sleek hair put behind the ears,
And crowned with scentless Immortelles!

The partridge hath forgot her nest
Amid the stubble by the rill.
In vain the lances of the frost
Seek for some tender thing to kill;
They cannot hurt the Immortelles!

Sad empress of the stony fell!
 Gray stoic of the blasted heath!
 Dullest of flowers that ever bloomed,
 And yet triumphant over death,
 O weird and winged Immortelle!

Lie lightly upon Nature's breast,
 And cover up her altered face,
 Lest we should shiver when we see
 The brightness of its vernal grace
 Grown grayer than the Immortelles!

The wind cries in the reedy marsh,
 And wanders, sobbing, through the dell,
 Poor, broken-hearted lover, he
 For violets finds the Immortelle!
 The Immortelle! The Immortelle!

LXV.

WORN OUT.

You say that the sun is shining,
 That buds are upon the trees,
 That you hear the laugh of the waters,
 The humming of early bees:
 I am pleased by none of these,—
 I am weary!

Let me alone! The silence
 Is sweeter than song to me!
 Dearer than Light is Darkness
 To the eyes that loathe to see!
 'Tis better to let me be,—
 I am weary!

I have faltered and fallen,—
 The race was but begun;

I am ashamed, and I murmur,
"O that the day were done!"
How can I love the sun,
Who am weary?

What will do for the flower
That is cut away at the root?
If the wing of the bird be broken,
What wonder the bird is mute?
O, peace! and no more dispute,—
I am weary!

I will give you a token,—
A token by which I know
When I have forgotten the trouble,—
The trouble that tires me so
That I can no farther go,
Being weary.

When you shall come some morning
And stand beside my bed,
And see the wonderful pallor
That over my face is spread,
Shrink not. But remember I said
I was weary.

Then shall you search my features,
But a trace you shall not see
Of all these months of sadness
That have put their mark on me;
Then know I am free,
Who was weary.

For the Old must fall and crumble
Before we can try the New;
We must taste that the False is bitter
Before we can crave the True.
This done, there's no more to do,
Being weary.

Only to droop the eyelids,
 Only to bow the head,
 And to pass from those who are sighing,
 "Alas! for our friend is dead!"
 But remember how I said,
 "I am weary!"

LXVI.

LAST JUNE.

Could I help smiling? It was May.
 I saw a snow-drift in the meadow;
 Last Spring was minded so to play
 At Winter; but there fell a shadow,
 That was born of gloom and sun,
 Upon the greenness at my side.
 I felt a shiver through me run,
 And all the gladness in me died,
 .
 Pale windflowers trembling in the grass,
 Each like an early blighted maiden,
 Provoked regards no more, alas!
 Since woodbines were all honey-laden.
 The crocus withered on its stem,—
 "But Summer shall supplant the Spring,
 And tulips lord it over them——"
 Was that the shadow of a wing?
 .
 I rose and crept across the place
 Where I could smell the snow of flowers,
 Its flakes were blown about my face
 In sudden and delicious showers.
 A-cold in May? My very lips
 Were chill, in spite of song and shine.
 I saw the shadow's slow eclipse
 Creep up again: it was not mine!

LXVII.

But still I soothed myself in thought:
"My May is tarnished; well, what matter?
The faces that my fears have wrought
The blessed winds of June shall scatter."
I saw a red rose half apart;
"And when her nun-like sister blows?"—
Alas! the anguish of my heart
Before I saw the first white rose!

I heard the robins in their nests;
I saw the blue gleam of the river;
Gruff humble-bees in yellow vests
Made all the apple-blossoms quiver.
A broken lily in the way
Was crushed beneath my careless foot.
"Thy hope," a whisper seemed to say,
"Is like a flower without a root!"

What matters it, this June, that red
And white rose buds have burst asunder,
Since one is sad and one is dead?
How did my heart divine, I wonder?
Ah, shadows! shadows everywhere!
But then his grave is in the sun,—
Only, when I am crouching there,
It almost seems that I am one!

LXVIII.

NEAR EVENTIDE.

My flesh is weary; but the way
Lies nearer to the vales of Rest,
And slowly, slowly creeps the day
Down to the threshold of the West.

Dear Father! if Thy love should send
 Some angel, full of pity sweet,
 To nerve me for the coming end,
 He'll track me by my bleeding feet.

I think, O Father—though my sight
 Discern no sign of help around,—
 Thou wilt not hold my striving light,
 Nor give me any needless wound.

Thou wilt not blame the trusting heart
 That witless, blindly reaching out,
 Nor blossom from its thorn could part,
 When thorns were set with flowers about.

Thou'lt lead me from this evening land,
 And with a morning crown my night,
 What time my victor soul shall stand
 Erect, transfigured in thy sight!

LXIX.

A HEART-SOB.

Only lay your hand in blessing
 Kindly on my stricken head;
 Kiss my weary eyes and forehead
 And the lips to sorrow wed.
 So—I ask no more, sweet mother!
 With my face upon your breast;
 If I slumber, do not wake me,—
 I am weary and would rest.

And I'll tell you where to lay me,
 When I'm fallen sound asleep,
 That my rest may be untroubled,
 Long and dreamless, still and deep,—

Where the maiden violets waken
To the kisses of the rain,
Bear me, in the dawning spring-time,
The freed prisoner of pain!

Where the young moss looks the greenest,
And the trees stand thick and tall,
And you hear the murmurous music
Of a hidden waterfall.
For I think I shall sleep sweetest
In the old woods, cool and dim;
Nature's being blending round me
In one grand, perpetual hymn.

When upon my careworn forehead
Rests the seal of endless peace,
And my mute lips smile in blessing
For this day of glad release,—
When I'm lying, with drooped eyelids,
Heedless of the morning beam
Lighting up my lifeless tresses
Strangely, with its living gleam,—

Then remember but my sorrow,
And my strong, exceeding love;
How with fiery pride and passion
Long my woman's nature strove.
Though I yielded, think how deeply
Late repentance pained my soul,
When the love I sought to stifle
Would not bow to my control.

O, forget my faults, sweet mother!
Let all bitter memories go;
Thinking, with a Christ-like mercy,
How I loved and suffered so
That my passionate heart was broken
By a lot so incomplete;
How without him life grew bitter,
Till, to reach him, Death grew sweet!

LXX.

A woman's voice,
So weak it makes you think of graves, is singing :

Some hearts that are too warm, too wild,
Must needs be broken for their good ;
Not till the artist's work is done
Is the design well understood.

And suffering sublimes the soul ;
So perfect peace will come at last,
And I shall know God's kind intent
When these sharp pains are overpast !

And as for me, let all souls know my creed :
One God, one love, both strangers to betrayal,—
One sovereign heart which pities the mistakes
Of weaker hearts, and what they suffer here,
And does not stamp the petty frowns of Time
On the grand forehead of Eternity.
One God, one love, for this world and the next !
If He should will it so, one happy love ;
If we should mar our fates, yet still one love—
Though one unhappy love—that knows no change,
No questioning, no doubting to the end ;
Till two twin souls be free to lose themselves
Each in the other, in such natural wise,
Their guardian angels, even, shall not be able
To separate and name them !
Because I do believe, with all my strength,
That God will never wholly put asunder
Two souls that truly love,—that count not death,
Nor pain, nor shame, nor loss of worldly good,
As anything in face of that great need
Which draws them toward each other.
They may sin, and so put love to shame ;

And if they sin, I know that they must suffer ;
Suffering, if love stays with them, they are purified.
And though God may divide them in this world,
If they keep faithful, God himself is for them,
Since He is love. And if they are but patient
I know that He will mate them in that future
Where every atom finds its proper place
Because of sheer attraction !

BROKEN LINKS.

OLD AND NEW.

A tousled letter with broken seal;
A dusty zithern with slackened strings;
A shattered nest and a rotten keel;
Distrust that sucketh the lives of kings;
A heart' that is cold to woe or weal;
A bird that flutters on tired wings;
The slave's dull pain that will not heal;
And stones too heavy for him that slings;
And a pulse too quick for the earth's slow swings;
An ancient woman, whose quaverings
Shake the sense from her utterings,
With an "O for the light of the faded springs!
And alack for the fate of forgotten things!
And ah for the sorrow of what has been!
The world's a flower with a worm within!"

A morn fresh sprung from the loins of night;
A song that is silver in all its rings;
A heart that waketh for pure delight;
And the first blue flowers that April brings;
And blind eyes looking at last on light;
A foot that is free in its wanderings;
A sweet bride hid in a cloud of white;
And a hand that is loose on its garnerings;
A lover that laughs at reckonings;
A child just out of its leading-strings;
And a true-eyed maiden who fearless flings
The sunlit hair from her brow, and sings:

“And it's hey, for the light of the coming springs!
And it's ho, for the bliss of unsounded things!
And it's ay, for the rapture that is to be
In the world new blossomed for Love and me!”
January 1, 1872.

VIOLETS IN AUTUMN.

I knew I should find the Daisy,
With her forehead so brave and white,
For the sun is her lover, to comfort her,
And to keep her in beauty bright;
And she folds the last of his kisses
In the golden well of her cup,
Then fearless sleeps in the frosty fields
Till the morning wakes her up.

And the purple Pink o' the mountain
Droppeth her velvet train
Where the stricken glory of forest leaves
Is shed in a scarlet rain;
And nods to the late red Clover;
And the stoical Immortelle;
And the timid buds of the Dewberry
Hide down in the sunny dell.

And I gathered the golden Aster
And the blossomy blades of grass;
Each bowing low, like a courtier,
To let his lady pass;
But the Violet!—O the Violet!—
I thought they were all asleep,
Each on her pillow of thistledown
In the pine wood dark and deep.

But they stood in hapless beauty
Under the sullen skies,

Each lamenting her mother, Spring,
With the sorrow of dewy eyes:
Five o' them, April's darlings,
On a bank of yellowed moss,
That long ago the south-wind
Had forgotten to blow across.

And I took these meek, sweet orphans,
Fair set 'neath emerald eaves;
But all for the love of the secret dear
That was hidden among their leaves.
Five little heads blue hooded,
Your message was all for me!
And ye were its fittest carriers,
For all that ye were so wee!

October, 1869.

WHICH IS BEST?

What if I saved from trampling feet
The drooping plumes of a wounded bird,
And tended its hurt with a gentle hand
Till its life new stirred?

What if it nestled against my cheek,
And tamed its shyness upon my breast,
Until I believed that it loved me more
Than its old-time nest?

And if some day, when I prized it most,
It should leave my hand with a sudden spring,
And cleave the blue of the summer sky
With a freshened wing,

And never pause at my pleading call,—
Never come back to my desolate breast,—

And forget I had saved its life, and forget
I had loved it best,—

Should I never open my arms again
To any helpless or suffering thing?
Never bind up the bruised heart
Nor the broken wing?

Better, a thousand times, to bear
A blow in place of an earned caress,
Than to turn aside into selfish ways,
Or to pity less.

Better the long abiding pain
Of a wronged love, in its sufferance meek,
Than the hardened heart and the bitter tongue,
And the sullen cheek.
1869.

THE LOOSING OF LILITH.

A LEGEND OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

["Lilith was Adam's first wife."—Legend of the Talmud.]

She was tired of strangling the hearts of boys
With the strands of her gold-red hair;
She was tired of blighting the innocent brows
Of babies lusty and fair;
So she said unto God, "I pray thee, Lord,
Let me wander upon the earth,
To teach new ways to the women there
Who are weary of home and hearth."

But the wonderful Mother of Christ, who sat
On the topmost step of the throne,
She looked up to God the Father and said,
When the words of Lilith were done:

“Now, for the sake of the Son I bore,
Let thy least handmaiden speak”;
And she bowed her before the Father God
In reverence sweet and meek.

Then a great new light went flashing out
Through the mansions many and fair;
And the seraphim glanced up Godward then,
Of His sudden smiling aware;
And the dear Christ said to his mother mild,
“Beloved, the Father hears!”
And Lilith, she stretched her lithe white neck,
And put the hair from her ears;

For the voice of Mary was sweet and low,
Like the wind by the river of God,
And she said, “My Father, I pray thee now
Loose not this creature abroad.
She hath troubled the sons of Adam sore
But she hath not worked her worst:
O let her not vex the daughters of Eve:
This was not written at first.”

Christ looked in the Father’s face, and then
Over his lips there flowed
The hidden thought of the Lord of heaven,
While the visage of Lilith glowed:
“They have forgotten thee, mother mine,—
These women who deafen the earth:
Let Adam’s rejected teach them now
What a brawling woman is worth.”

Straight out of heaven sped Lilith then,
With a cruel scorn in her eyes,—
She that was first made equal with Adam,
And that fell, being overwise.
It is not a new story now, you know:
They were too much alike to agree;

And she wrangled and fought with Adam, until
God, pitiful, set him free,

And gave him to wife the meeker Eve,
Who sinned through womanly trust,
And who, in her sorrow for sin, was like
A sweet crushed flower i' the dust.
Therefore it had come to pass that Lilith
Sore hated the daughters of Eve,
Because to their mother, beloved of Adam,
Our God had given reprieve.

Concerning the doings of Lilith on earth,
If you'll look abroad in the land,
You'll see that the caldron of wrath is stirred
By her white and devilish hand.
Wherever she findeth a woman's heart
That is easy to trap or to win,
That will none of the meekness of Mary mild,
She straightway entereth in;

And her image, it multiplieth fast,—
Too fast for the peace of the world;
And Lilith meets you at every step,
Ribbioned and creped and curled.
Her marks are a sceptical, brazen brow,
And a hard and a glittering eye,
And a voice that striveth to fill the world
With its clamoring shrill and high.

Ah! do you think that a Christ could be
Born of a woman like this?
Is there any rest in the arms of such,
Whose lips are bitter to kiss?
Woe for the little children that cling,
Unwelcomed, upon their hands;
They are only thinking of how their deeds
May startle the farthest lands.

When the fire goes out on the hearth at home,
 And the chamber is left unkept;
 When a shadow that climbeth from heart to eye
 'Twixt husband and wife hath crept;
 When the wife is shy of the mother's estate,
 And maidens are counting the cost,—
 It behooves us to think a little upon
 The glory that Lilith lost.

If we go down to the root of the thing,
 We shall see that they put Self first,
 And that is the sin of sins, for which
 Fair Lilith was greatly curst.
 They are out of the shadow of the Cross,
 And Self is their idol in life,
 And it is not the voice of God they hear,
 But of Adam's demon wife.

1871.

CHRISTMAS EVE CHANT OF THE BRETON PEASANTS.

It was a dim, delicious night;
 The earth, close wrapt in ermined white,
 Lay languid, in the misty light.
 The circling spheres were all in tune,
 And, in their midst, the Empress Moon
 Was brightening to her highest noon.
 It was the night when Bethlehem's star
 Guided the sages from afar.
 It was the night when shepherds heard
 The reverent air by music stirred.
 It was the night of old renown,
 When wondering angel-eyes looked down,
 To see Christ's head, bare of its crown,
 Within the manger laid!

.

There is a sound of thronging feet,—
 What youthful crowds are in the street!
 They go out from the stifling town,
 They seek the white and lonely down;
 They walk in silence, till they find
 A spot where four roads straitly wind.
 Where four roads meet, about a place
 Made sacred by the Cross's grace.
 There, men and maids, in separate file,
 Do range themselves, nor speak the while,
 Nor break the charm, by gest' or smile.
 Till, sudden, breaks upon the air
 A sound of singing, strong and clear,—
 Thus chant the hardy Breton youths:

“What is new upon the earth;
 What fresh wonder goeth forth,
 That its ways are full of pilgrims
 And its dwellings full of mirth?

“Sounds of gladness on the air!
 Happy faces everywhere!
 Tell us, O ye silent virgins!
 Wherefore is the night so fair?”

Then, silver-soft, the girlish voices rise,
 And with the sweetness of their meek replies
 Upon the frosty air breed melodies:

“Lo! the sacred hour is near!
 What was darkened now is clear.
 Christ is coming! Raise your voices,—
 Say Farewell to Doubt and Fear!”

Resounding through the darkness, then,
 Peal the deep voices of the men,
 Who raise the solemn song again:

“Why is all the world abroad,
Raising midnight prayers to God,
Till the censored air is heavy
With its supplicating load?”

Then clearer, purer, richer, rise
The hidden maidens’ sweet replies,
Like wonders out of mysteries:

“Lo! the Prince of Peace is born!
Lo! on high the star of morn!
And it shall not fade forever,
Nor its brilliancy be shorn.”

Then, in concord perfect, sweet,
Tones of youths and maidens meet;
And they gladly sing together,
This auspicious hour to greet:

“Sing tonight,—for Christ is born!
Lo! on high the star of morn!
And it shall not fade forever,
Nor its brilliancy be shorn.

“Sing! deliverance from our woes,
By the blood that overflows
And renews the Son of Adam,—
He no longer burdened goes.

“Sing! because it is His feast;
Join the Princes of the East,
Bring Him gifts amid rejoicings,—
He will smile upon the least!

“Sing! while Christmas crowns ye weave;
On the Cross a garland leave.
Lo! the World’s one Virgin-Mother
Heals the hurt that came of Eve!”

BROKEN OFF.

Men said unto a prince of story-tellers,
 "Tell us another tale!"
And yet, beside the bells, stood phantom knellers,
 And his voice was fit to fail.

At first he faltered, saying, "I am weary,
 And the words are slow to come.
Across my ken flit visions dim and eerie,
 And 'tis sweet to keep at home!"

But the clamor rose, by many voices strengthened;
 And one voice in his heart
Grew louder as the spring-tide shadows lengthened:
 "Ah! 'tis dull to sit apart!"

"Be prouder than to wait with fingers folded,
 Scared, looking out for death;
Drop not the habit which thy life hath moulded
 But with thy lease of breath!"

He passed his hand across his heavy forehead,
 And then across his eyes;
Before him rose a spectre, dim and horrid,
 With terrible replies:

"The name by which men name me while they shiver,
 It is Swiftly Certain Death.
Leave all thy latest arrows in their quiver,
 Or 'gage to me thy breath!"

Ah me! this prince of worthy story-tellers
 Stood sad beneath the sun;

For he could see where stood the phantom kneller—
But the story was begun!

Some said, "It is his story of all stories";
And others: "Lo! he fails!
His later cannot match his earlier glories,—
He falters and he pales!"

But men pressed around him, eagerly, to listen;
And all else was forgot.
He coaxed the smile to shine, the tear to glisten;
And then—his voice was not!

The tale was but begun,—the web half woven,
The colors scarcely mixed,—
The cunning of his hand was not yet proven,—
His intent hardly fixed.

For the dark comrade who waked with his walking
Laid lightly on his lip
A cold forefinger,—and he ceased from talking—
Suddenly—without slip.

Ah! still lips locked on the mysterious story!
Ah! hand that cannot hold
The pen by which he earned his meed of glory,—
He's dead! and 'tis not told!

1870.

THE MISSING STEAMER.

Breeze! thou hast swept o'er the stormy Atlantic,
Thy kisses are fresh with the salt of its spray;
Knowest thou aught of the ship that is missing,—
The ship that sailed bravely and blithely away?
Answer, O, answer!

Wavelet! the seething of turbulent waters
Sent thee to break on this still, sunny beach;
Say! did she yield to the storm and the darkness,
Or spread her white sails till they bore her from
reach;

Answer, O, answer!

Where have ye drifted her, winds of the ocean?
Where have ye stranded her, waves of the sea?
What is the fate that hath claimed her and wrapped
her?

Whisper, O, whisper the secret to me.

Answer, O, answer!

Thou that controullest the might of the tempest
Thou that restrainest the wing of the wind,—
Thou, in thy ken, holdest all of this mystery;
Lift up the veil, and show what is behind.

Answer, Lord, answer!

For behold! there are hearts that cry out in the
night-time.

That have no delight in the face of the day,—
Hearts that go out o'er the waste of the waters,
To seek for the ship that sailed blithely away.

Answer, Lord, answer!

1870.

DEAR MOTHER.

I locked my hand in hers, and said,
“Let me go with her through this dark;
For all the good and ill of life
Has touched us with the self-same mark.
Some bitter pains I comprehend,
But not the absence of her love,

Whose deep, unfailing tenderness
Would any lighter friend reprove."

I called her,—but the mother-look
Was blotted out in Death's eclipse;
And, vaguely desolate, I shrank
Before those altering eyes and lips.
O God! since ever I could speak
My voice had fallen on faithful ears;
'Twas "Mother!" in my triumph hour,
And "Mother!" in my time of tears.

I saw her going from my grasp
Beyond the boundaries of Time,—
Beyond the life her soul had made
Through love and suffering sublime.
I could not shield, nor share, nor save;
She drifted deathward all alone;
Her heart insensate to my pain,
Her ear unheeding of my moan.

Yet mother-love, rare mother-love,
Responsive in the throes of death!
The soul triumphant over clay,
Was victor of her latest breath.
Sudden into her darkened eyes
Flashed Love and Memory at the last;
And then the spirit's radiance set,
And the dear face was overcast.

Only the shell which held the seed;
Only the casket of the gem;
But all the bitterness for us,
And all the victory for them!
For us, the deep, slow-closing wound;
For us, the haunting pain of years;
The dull, vague, aching sense of loss
Alternate with our passionate tears.

Not yet the creed of Faith can fill
This bitter want, these empty arms:
It will not sooth me now to know
That she is locked from life's alarms.
For when I see this pale, strange face,
So like, yet so unlike her own,
I only feel that she is gone,
And I must learn to live alone.

I know this is not Mother now;
And yet I cling about this clay,
And watch to see that look break out
Which met me but the other day.
So calm! A furrow on the brow
Still lingers. 'Twas the work of years;
A mother's tears,—a mother's pangs,—
Mute token of a mother's cares!

Somewhere, I know, she waits for me,
In some bright nook of ageless lands;
But O, I miss the fleshly proofs
Which craving human love demands.
To see her dresses laid aside,
To take the books she used to read,
And find the flowers she placed within—
O mother! this is pain indeed.

1864.

A PROBLEM.

Two brothers at one mother's knee,
Kissed by the rosy fleeting hours,
Alike in boyish bearing free,
Laugh out among the morning flowers,—
The paths in which their feet are set
Unparted and unwidened yet.

They linger at that mother's side
Awhile with timid clinging hands,
Until the path grows fair and wide
And stretches into distant lands—
Alas for fancy's mirage gleam!
Alas for boyhood's broken dream!

And now, no longer hand in hand,
They wander singly,—far apart;
Alone, each treads the dangerous sand,
Or fronts the storm with dauntless heart,—
In thought and word how different they,
The two who in one cradle lay.

For one the path grew drear and strait,
And stones and thorns choked up the way;
The clouds, that hung like leaden fate
Above him, hid the light of day,
Save when the angry noontide glare
Fell on the head in meekness bare.

Poor feet! All worn and bleeding now.
But what a conquering soul looks out
From eyes serene—O hallowed brow!—
Undarkened by any shade of doubt.
He faded in a calm devout,
Unflushed by grand triumphal shout.

The other followed out his fate,—
'Twas written in his eagle eye,—
He stemmed a tide of wrath and hate,
And towered above it, lone and high.
Not for his feet the lowly ways,
With few to love and none to praise!

He climbed until he gained the height,
He strove until he clutched the crown;
Till—proved the stoutest in the fight
And deafened with his own renown—

With tired heart and drooping lid,
He sank,—and from the world was hid.

Two souls, each costly with the worth
Of Nature's inborn nobleness,—
With laurelled brow one trod the earth;
Alone, in darkness and distress,
The other toiled until the day
Gave place to evening's shadows gray.

Yet, when each glory-robed gate
Its golden splendor flings apart,
And those two souls without them wait,
Which hath the higher, nobler part?
Both names are shrined in such an equal burst
Of angel notes, Heaven knows not which was first!

AN EMPTY NEST.

Mine is the song of an empty nest,
Others will bring you braver songs;
But mine must utter my heart's behest,
Though I sing it to heedless throngs.

My steps were over the blenchéd leaves
That had taken the frost's untimely kiss;
Not long ago we'd carried the sheaves;
But the season was all amiss.

With hanging head and with loitering feet
Toward the open land I went,
Through places that summer had made so sweet
With a glamour but briefly lent.

I trod upon something soft and dry,—
For my eyes were full on the flaming west;

And just where the grass was thick and high
Was lying—an empty nest.

O, what visions of faded spring,
O, what memories of silenced song,
Of brooding breast and of glancing wing,
To an empty nest belong!

And the thought that suddenly came to me—
Close to the water, facing the west—
Was of some singing that used to be
In another forsaken nest.

There were two birds that began to sing
Low in the fields of yellow corn,
Not for the heed their song would bring,
But for love of the dewy morn.

Birds of one feather, and sister birds,
Crowded out of a roof-tree nest,
Hatched within sound of lowing herds,
But flying away from the west.

Birds of one feather fare best together;
Singing they built them another nest,
Sat in it and sang, in the worst of weather,
Each loving the other best.

But we who listened one morning knew
That only one bird was left to sing,—
They never had sung apart, the two,—
And we talked of a broken wing.

Now, should you chance to walk that way,
You would vainly listen for any song;
But what regrets for the vanished lay
To this empty nest belong!

AN UNPREMEDITATED ANSWER.

S. S. C.

You say that my songs are sad ones,
But O, is the world not sad?
How the sobs follow swift on laughter,
Before we have time to be glad!

We come into life with wailing;
When we love we are pale with fear;
The babe, the bride, and the dead man
Each give or receive a tear.

The sea is forever moaning,
And the pines forever sigh;
Would you mix with their plaint the laughter
Of so weak a thing as I;

IN ITALY.

ALMA MATER.

Delight of my spirit,—Italy!
Shining across the sea!
I have broken the vow I made
Never to part from thee.
Pity me for my broken vow
Because of my breaking heart,
That is so sick for the lack of thee,
All ravishing that thou art!

My beautiful mother,—Italy!
Rose of a thousand charms!
Pain and Death I could laugh away,
Lying within thine arms!
Sweet mother! I could forget the hope
That found me but to slay,
And fret no more for the joy that was
But the changeling of a day!

All the others have played me false,
But I know thou art for me.
Nothing can hurt the deep delight
That cometh of loving thee.
Tender nurse of my starveling life!
Dear comfortress of my soul!
Once I gave thee half my love,
Now thou shalt have the whole.

I'm pale for the lack of thy sunny skies,
I call to thee in my dreams.

O for the scent of thine orange-groves,
For the shout of thy silver streams!
The blood-red rose of the South will fade
In a clime that is overcast,
And thus I wither afar from thee,—
My best love and my last!

A NEW LEGEND.

They come from the North and the West and the
East—

Men that are mightiest and men that are least:
Where are they bidden, and where is the feast?
“’Tis a fair dead woman we’re going to see;
And her name of names it was Italy!”

So they go down to the spicy South—
That is silent, because of her songless mouth;
And dreary, for even of tears there’s drouth—
To wonder and pity that such should be
The fall of her that was Italy.

And three princes of might there were with them;
And the foremost, he kissed her cerement’s hem;
And he said: “She is broken off at the stem,
But a fairer flower we shall never see!”
And he wept because of her,—Italy!

But the second came tearless and nearer pressed,
And he sternly gazed on the stirless breast:
“She would not bend to my fierce behest;
And she died in my gripe, for she hated me;
So I helped to kill her,—Italy!”

But the third was unlike the second and first,
Though his face showed not how his heart was curst;

For he hid his thought till in flame it burst;
And he said to the others: "Let us see
If she's dead or sleeping,—Italy!"

"For 'tis said that she grieved herself to death
For a boon that she craved with her failing breath.
Who knows but a life-throb lingers beneath!"
So he called her—the fair, dead mystery—
By her name of names, which was Italy!

And he said to her: "Rise! Behold the hour!
I will breathe into thee the breath of my power;
I will help thee reconquer thine olden dower.
I will help thee to stand up fair and free,—
I thy knight; thou my lady, Italy!"

He bent him down to her dulléd ear;
And the soul, that was faint with hunger and fear,
Thrilled and wakened and turned to hear;
And she rose up, fair as fair could be,
And the world was glad of her,—Italy!

She arose in her palace of delight,
And shook from her eyelids the mists of night,
And walked again in her beauty's might;
And she reckoned with all the princes three,
But she kissed the third one,—Italy!

She kissed him closely, upon his mouth,
With the fast, warm kisses of eager youth:
"Come into my garden, that fronts the south!
There's no sweet thing that shall not be
For my knight of the lilies," said Italy.

So they wandered away in the sunny weather,
In the groves of citron-blossoms, together.
At first she forgot to ask him whether
His love was a free gift, and if he'd be
Helper or tyrant to Italy.

And she said to him, "You have me free,
When I thought this never again could be;
But the seal of my bridal with Liberty
Is kept by my cursers away from me.
Will you help me to get it?" said Italy.

How heavily fell her heart! and O,
How salt were her tears when he answered, "No!"
But they changed to fire when she turned to go;
For he held her back, nor would leave her free:
In his strength he constrained her,—Italy.

She said: "I thought my sorrows were done,
And now I see they are but begun.
Of friends to help me there is not one.
I've found a foe where a lover should be:
There's death in his kisses," said Italy.

"His helping has burdened me overmuch
If my steps must turn at his guiding touch;
And fate of mine can never be such.
He keeps the crown of my pride from me!"
And she drooped for the shame of it,—Italy!

She sat in the dust, with her face to Rome:
"O thou, of princes and martyrs the home!
With thine unlit beacon, the great white dome,—
I am thine! thou art mine! And no good shall be
While they plot to part us," said Italy.

She raised her head up, and she said:
"Turin to serve me when I am wed;
But Rome for the crowning of my head:
There shall be no joy till this thing be."
And this was the burden of Italy.

She stretched her hand out, and she said:
"Milan to adorn me when I am wed;
But Rome for the crowning of my head:

There shall be no joy till this thing be."
And this was the burden of Italy.

She stretched her hand out, and she said:
"Milan to adorn me when I am wed;
But Rome for the crowning of my head:
There shall be no singing till this thing be."
And this was the burden of Italy.

She walked a little apart, and said:
"Florence to tire me when I am wed;
But Rome for the crowning of my head:
There shall be no feasting till this thing be."
And this was the burden of Italy.

She laid her hand on the hilt, and said.
"Venice to gird me when I am wed;
But Rome for the crowning of my head:
There shall be no peace till this thing be."
And this was the burden of Italy.

She plucked the sword half out, and said:
"Naples to please me when I am wed;
But Rome is the place of my bridal bed,
The seal of my glory and unity."
And this was the burden of Italy.

She set her feet in the path to Rome,
But the day and the hour were not yet come;
And with face as white as the white sea-foam,
And soul that was anguished unutterably,
She turned away backward,—Italy!

"But I wait," she said, "by the light of the sun,—
I wait with my errand but begun;
I wait with my crowning work undone:
There shall be discord till this thing be."
This is the last saying of Italy.

Just after Mentana, 1868.

THE SEQUEL TO "A NEW LEGEND."

And still she sat in the road to Rome,
With her hungry eyes on the great white dome,
Mindless of riot and ruin at home,
Saying to passers, "Let me be:
Behold, I am she that was Italy!"

And hanging her head for sorest shame
At the growing dishonor of her name,
While the summers went and the winters came;
And, passing, the world said, "Is this she
That was called by the name of Italy!"

"For she traileth her splendor in the dust,
And her sword in its scabbard getteth rust;
And truly in her may no man trust;
And it shall only remembered be,
Hereafter, that she was Italy."

But she, with her head between her knees,
Was not moved for any of these
Reproaches, clustering thick as bees;
Only she said, "Now let me be,
Since Rome is riven from Italy."

"I am but a stirrer-up of strife,
Having no more delight in life:
I am as a jealous and unloved wife;
And thrift and quiet are not for me,
Since rot's at the heart of Italy."

And now the darkness had come apace,
Blotting out from before her face

The things she had seen for a little space,
And the hopes she had hoped when, young and free,
Praises were sung for Italy;

When sudden and overflowing light
Ravished the darkness from the night;
And made it brighter than day is bright;
And she hid her eyes: "It is not for me,
Fallen, forsaken Italy!"

Then steadily to her startled ear
Answered a small voice, still and clear:
"Rise, for deliverance is near!
Come to thine own, if thou art she
That is called by the name of Italy."

She looked, and the gates were opened wide,
And the keys of Peter were at her side,
And the glory had clothed her like a bride,
And the dome was alight. "Is this for me?
Ah, then once more I am Italy!"

As one in a dream she entered, weak;
But they kissed her on lip and chin and cheek;
And all were too glad for any to speak,—
Wrapped in wonder that Rome should be
Safe in the arms of Italy.

"Wait a little!" she whispers low:
"The tide will come and the tide will go.
It will bring us Liberty in its flow:
Since we all gathered together be,
The rest shall be added to Italy."

She will put her crown upon her head;
She will smooth the silk of her bridal bed;
She will go out proudly charioted.
Peace and plenty for her shall be,
Since Rome is given to Italy!

February, 1871.

CLYTE LISTENING.

O lovely and sufficing! fair wonder among women!—
For, lo! the gates of girlhood have softly closed
behind thee,—
Why art thou lingering here, in the hush of rose-
lined thickets,
Where the eyes of him that cometh shall surely
seek and find thee?
'Mongst the honey-hearted flowers his snares are
set the thickest;
And where thy feet are straying he shall surely
take and bind thee.

Like a folded bloom, tide-taken, on smooth waters,
to the ocean,
So, unknowing, toward the hidden, drifts thy vir-
ginal sweet being.
Ah, my lily-throated darling! are thine eyelids lotos-
laden?
Else what is it that thine eyes are so afraid of
seeing?
Thou hast heard him but in dreams, thou hast
known him but in visions:
What is it counsels loitering when instinct coun-
sels fleeing;

Little ear, that should but listen to the lowest of
sweet whispers,
Late you seemed a perfect pearl from her amber
hair outgleaming:
Now you're like the pinkest sea-shell of the warm,
blue Adriatic,

And the pale bud of her cheek hath caught your
 brighter seeming.
 Chin and temple and low forehead, even red mouth,
 redder glowing:
 O my blossom of all blossoms! with whose glory
 art thou beaming?

 Not a myrtle spray hath rustled in the pathway by
 the fountain;
 The tame dove hath not fluttered 'mid the ripe
 grapes overhead;
 But her neck is bent the way that his distant feet
 are coming,
 Though she stands as still and dreamlike as a
 phantom of the dead;
 And the startled heart that hideth in the white rose
 of her bosom
 Behind its lovely fastness hath leapt—hath heard
 his tread.

A SICILIAN MIDNIGHT MADRIGAL.

In Sleep's still mansion dost thou lie encloistered,
 Thou Lily of my heart,
 By the cool dream-waters, in the Hall of Shadows,
 Thy sweetness hived apart!
 Rare bud, unclose! shine out, my Star of Even!
 We are waiting, all, for thee;
 For the flowers of Earth and the gentle eyes of
 Heaven
 Are keeping watch with me!"

 Her head is quiet on her maiden pillow,
 Her sweet eyes in eclipse;
 But she thrills in sleep, through all her gentle mem-
 bers,
 To her vermeil finger-tips.

“The wind of midnight prints its humid kisses
 Upon my lifted brow,—
I pale with pleasure, faint with only thinking
 Shouldst thou caress me—thou!
O pain of Love! desire, that smites with anguish,
 And deep, delirious dole!
Stir in thy dainty nest, my bird! and listen
 To the night-song of my soul!”

Her cheek gleams redder through the rich dark lat-
 tice
 Of her deep hair’s unbound grace,—
There is a look of hearing far-off music
 Upon her tranced face.

“The Hours go reeling, drunken with aroma,—
 I am spent with odorous pain;
The citron petals that my feet are crushing
 Fall in a nectarous rain.
The priestess Night takes up her mystic censer
 At Nature’s moonlit shrine;
My love consumes my life in costlier incense,
 Beloved! to burn at thine!”

The dream-flush rises to her nun-like forehead,
 She is troubled in her sleep.
One slight hand stirs, as if it sought another
 To nestle in its keep.

“The deep strong pulse of the earth are timing
 To the heavings of the sea;
But the old concord of my life is jangled
 For the sweet sake of thee!
I could spell out the stars’ mysterious meanings
 By the light of thy dear eyes;
I could tell thee all that the flowers and winds are
 plotting,
 My Rose of Paradise!

"Thou dost embody the unwritten poem
Of this midsummer's night,
O my Regina of the Perfect Presence!
My wonderful Delight!
Ah! to snow thee up in a shower of myrtle blossoms,
Head violets on thy breast,—
And then, with kisses, part thy spicy covert,
To say, 'I love thee best!'"

Her languid arms unconsciously are lifted
In that caressing way
In which a white dove ruffles its soft pinions
On a happy pairing-day.

"Shall I not move thee from thy cold, white silence
By the strange strength of pain?
I will conquer all the allied worlds to clasp thee,
If thou love me back again.
My life is heavy, with its sole, sweet secret,—
Behold! I cry to thee!
Rise from thine Eden-dreams, sweetheart! and
listen—
Listen! and answer me!"

Like a pale, pink bud flung on a moonlit snowdrift,
She sleeps in saintly white;
But her listening heart is panged with helpless
yearning,
While his sorrow sweetens night.
Sorrento, 1868.

MAZZINI.

I.

BURNING LOW.*

Is it true that the clear white beauty
Of the wonderful soul that shone
Through his face in a pallid splendor
Like the light from an astral zone,
Is clouded by disappointment
And darkened by grievous doubt?
Is it true that the light in the beautiful lamp
Is almost out?

Is it true that he hates the sunshine,
Keeping his face to the wall?
That his seeing is careless of any sight,
His hearing of any call;
That his quiet and feeble fingers
On the coverlet lie along,
Like those of a man who has done with thought,
With sob and with song?

Then, God that art good, I pray thee,
Roll back a little for him
The burial stone of the sepulchre,
Where lieth so cold and dim
She whom he longed for living,—
She whom he deplores as dead.

*During the excesses of the Paris Commune; 1871.
1871.

Because she lies so starkly still
With bruised head.

Show him a little, I pray thee,
That she is only asleep.
So haply this wan, fond lover
Shall find the heart to weep;—
Seeing that she, though wounded,
Shall amend her by and by,—
And, being thus shaken 'twixt joy and sorrow,
Shall forget to die!

II.

O U T

A light is out in Italy,
A golden tongue of purest flame.
We watched it burning, long and lone,
And every watcher knew its name,
And knew from whence its fervor came:
That one rare light of Italy,
Which put self-seeking souls to shame!

This light which burnt for Italy
Through all the blackness of her night,
She doubted, once upon a time,
Because it took away her sight.
She looked and said, "There is no light!"
It was thine eyes, poor Italy!
That knew not dark apart from bright.

This flame which burnt for Italy,
It would not let her haters sleep.
They blew at it with angry breath,
And only fed its upward leap,
And only made it hot and deep.
Its burning showed us Italy,
And all the hopes she had in keep.

This light is out in Italy,
Her eyes shall seek for it in vain!
For her sweet sake it spent itself,
Too early flickering to its wane,—
Too long blown over by her pain.
Bow down and weep, O Italy,
Thou canst not kindle it again!

1872.

AT THE GRAVE OF KEATS.

I.

O rare, sweet singer!
I've come by lone, untrodden ways
To linger near thy dust divine;
I have no polished words of praise
To laud those words of thine,—
Not "writ in water," no, dear heart!
Be comforted, sweet poet soul!
If so be that thy spiritual part
Reseek its human's goal.

II.

O rare, sweet singer!
I've come to find thee all alone.
The grass waves high above my head,
As here I crouch and kiss this stone,
And grieve that thou art dead.
Couldst thou not wait a little while,
And scorn the critic's crabbed flout,
And patient toil for Fortune's smile,
And triumph over doubt?

III.

O rare, sweet singer!
And didst thou doubt thyself, in truth,

Beneath the scourge of mocking words,
 That wrench the poet's heart like blows
 Upon a zithern's chords?
 But no! I deem it rather was
 That fatal languor of the soul
 Which comes of love when given in vain,
 And yet beyond control.

IV.

O rare, sweet singer!
 So nobly made, so richly dowered,
 Yet withered ere thy manhood's prime,—
 The almond-tree, leaf bare, but flowered,*
 Without a fruitage time!
 Ah, flame-like life! how soon it failed,
 How soon the shell of pearl was broken!
 Ah, silver tongue! that, dying, wailed,
 Yet left its love unspoken!

V.

O rare, sweet singer!
 I'm glad they've left thee all alone;
 For I have made this pilgrimage
 Unto thy lone memorial stone
 Vague yearnings to assuage.
 Ah, canst thou see these tears that fall?
 Ah, canst thou hear this passionate sigh?
 Thy sorrows all my thoughts intrall,—
 I mourn thy destiny.

VI.

O rare, sweet singer!
 And must I leave thee all alone
 In this Italian solitude?
 The breath of flowers, the zephyr's moan,

*The tree known as the Flowering Almond, which bears beautiful pink flowers before its leaves appear, but no fruit.

Would suit thy delicate mood.
My wishes half conjure a face
Of beauty, spiritual and frail,
Fit dweller of this charmed place,
To which I murmur, "Vale!"

Rome, May, 1865.

THE NEW-WORLD EXILE IN ITALY.

The most delicious skies that zone the earth
Are bluely burning into deeper night;
And those refulgent stars that haunt the South
Are flashing into sight.

The sea before me, and the hills behind,—
The vineyards in the shadow at my feet:
The wind has been among the myrtle-buds,
And with their breath is sweet.

There is a golden gleam among the green,—
The pale gold gleam of ripening Southern fruit:
The sound of love-birds, bickering in their nests,
Blends with a far-off lute.

And down the rocky, jasmine-latticed path,
That leadeth to the orange avenue,
Comes with free steps a stately, brown-faced girl,
In peasant kirtle blue.

And the red token of the Phrygian cap
Upon some passing fisher's classic head—
The graceful symbol of lost Liberty,
That serves him in her stead—

Reminds me that the place whereon I stand
Is the world's Eden of ideal delight,

Where slip away the years on velvet feet,
Unhurt by frostful blight.

O clime of Love and land of wonderment,
Where the sun ripeneth the blood to fire!
Compared to thine, a cold land's life is but
An underfed desire.

Here the cool silence of untroubled rest,
Or unrest sweeter, laps the odorous nights;
And all thy days are full of sun and song,
And set with pleasant sights.

I, a pale shadow, haunting these delights,
Not for the love of Beauty do I keep
My tristful watch, but that my heart awakes.
And will not let me sleep.

There is a fever burning in my blood,
There is a tumult throbbing in my brain;
The loveliness of this Italian night
Awakes but passionate pain.

O Italy! thou dear heart's Paradise,
That takest the exile to thy cradling arms!
Forgive me if I cannot all forget
My sorrow in thy charms.

Thou art not dearer than mine own dear land,
Albeit she proved a harsher nurse to me;
And now that I am banished from her shores,
She hath forgotten me.

I gave her all,—I had not much to give;
I laid my youth's endeavor at her shrine,
Forgot the ties of blood, the love of friends,
To make her sorrows mine.

I watched with her throughout her trial-night
And never faltered 'mid its deepest dark:
Not any grief that paled her wasted face
But touched me with its mark.

What did I ask of her? To take a gift.
She let it fall from out her listless hand;
She did not want the heart, the will, the brain,
That waited her command.

I was not counted worthy in her sight;
Not all my love could buy a moment's thought;
And at her feet neglected fell the gift
At which my youth had wrought.

I know it was not worthy her desert,—
I know the giver lacked the master's skill;
The hasty hand was all too young to do
The eager worker's will.

And yet one smile would not have cost her dear,
Where so much love and fealty plead for grace:
She gave it not; my young ambition found
No favor in her face.

So, when her woe was spent, and she put on
The festal garments of her joy again,
I left her, for she had no need of me
When she was past her pain.

For she hath come again to summer hours,
And hath enow of flatterers and friends;
And they who left her in her perilous shifts
Haste now to make amends.

Let her forget me! But, O, let her not
Forget what hero-blood endows her earth,
And not forego the charter hardly earned,
For things of little worth!

For me, I waste beneath the weary load
Of withering hopes and unfulfilled desires;
Ambitions, aspirations, memories,—all
Are self-consuming fires.

But the slow moon comes up from out the sea,
Languid and large and stately in her place,
And shames this weakness she sees in me
By her unmoved face!
Island of Ischia, July, 1866.

A LOVE-SONG OF SORRENTO.

Come away to the shade of the citron grove,
Carina!
I hear the voice of the brooding dove,
Carina!
Her soft throat swells as she tells her love
To her tender mate in the myrtle above,
And their tremulous pinions responsive move,
Cara! Carina!

Ah! Love is sweet as the spring is sweet,
Carina!
For me thou makest the spring complete,
Carina!
The young wind bloweth unto thy feet
A drift of flowers thy steps to meet,
And the wounded blossoms perfume the heat,
Cara! Carina!

They are tokens for only a bride to wear,
Carina!
Yet I would crown thee if I might dare,
Carina!
Ah! shy and sweet and tender and rare,

Put away from thine eyes thy shining hair.
Nay, now, have I startled thee unaware?
Cara! Carina!

My heart is lying across thy way,
Carina!
As thou crushest the flowers, wilt thou crush it,—
say,
Carina?
Or, sadder yet, wilt thou let it stay
Where it is lying, well away,
All on this pleasant morning in May?
Cara! Carina!

My beautiful flower of flowers! No,
Carina!
Thou wilt not scorn it nor crush it so,
Carina!
One true little word before we go;
Close,—nestle close,—and whisper low,—
Low while the faint south breezes blow,
Cara! Carina!

Thou'lt wear nothing but white when we are wed,
Carina!
Thou'lt have orange-blossoms about thy head,
Carina!
The maidens shall string them on silver thread;
On a rose-leaf carpet thou shalt tread,
While the bride-blush maketh thy beauty red,
Cara! Carina!

Sorrento, 1868.

TO HIM WHOSE NAME SIGNIFIES A
BLESSING.*

O King! because thou art an honest man,**
 And worthily dost wear Castruccio's sword,
 I count thee with my heroes, spite of all
 The vicious tongues that so despoil thy fame,
 Despite the eyes that only see thy spots;
 Yet need is that the ground-work must be bright,
 Or else they could not see the spots so clearly!
 And need is that the spots be rare exceptions,
 Or else they could not so well counted be!
 And others may—but—I—I never can
 Forget thou art the first Italian king
 That hath not sold his people's liberty,
 Or given it over to some tyrant pope,
 Or let it slip from out a careless keep.
 Let others, if they will, forget these things;
 But I must hold them in my memory,
 And bless thee for them, for Italia's sake!

THREE SYMBOLS.

They bore to an island in the sea
 One, an exile lone,
 Who made and spake these parables three
 When his hope had flown:

A wind-harp swelled into perfect song
 'Neath Zephyrs' soft touch;

*Victor Emanuel; God with us in victory.
 **"Il re galant'uomo," the people call him.

But Boreas did it a grievous wrong,
 For he smote it too much.
He smote it so rudely, its delicate chords
 Wailed in eloquent pain,
Saying in plaintive and mystical words,
 We accord not again!

A lark sprang up from the dewy corn
 With an arching throat,
Greeting the light of the blushing morn
 With a proud, sweet note.
With his eye on the sun and his heart in his song,
 He parted the air;
"We shall reach it," he said, "though the way be
 long,
 But his fate met him there!

The nightingale sat 'mid the milk-white blooms
 With her breast on the thorn,
Making melodious the fragrant glooms
 Till the day should be born.
In a rapture of joy and pain
 Swelled the faithful breast;
But the thorn went too deep to come out again,
 Thus exultingly pressed!

O ravished lyre! and O wounded wing!
 And O breathless throat!
Is it worthy—the shattered life I bring—
 To follow your rote?
Sweet mother Italy! Give me rest!
 For I sing no more;
The thorn has pierced me too deep in the breast,
 And my mounting is o'er.
Capri, August 12, 1867.

LOVER'S LEAVES.

TO MY RIGHTFUL READERS.

Venturous boy and curious girl,
Glancing shyly through the roses,
Each at other's conscious face,
While you tie your April posies,—

You are looking out for Love,
Having nothing else to do;
While you wait for him to come,
Read what here is writ for you!

Ye, whose feet at last have found
Pathways lined with Passion Flowers,
And whose hearts are in revolt
At the shortness of the hours,—

See, as in a mirror here,
Much of what you think and do.
Lovers' lives are all akin;
Therefore this is writ for you!

You, who know so well the taste
Of the bitter, after sweet;
And who time no more your steps
To the steps of other feet,—

Memory, not less sweet than sad,
Turns the page without ado;
You have time enough to read
What is written here for you!

A RHYME OF THE MAPLE-TREE.

A brown-winged bird is singing
 High up in the maple-tree;
Out loud, with a pretty bravery,
 To his sole self singeth he,
While the reddened leaves are falling
 Fast down from the maple-tree.

A brown-haired girl is sitting
 Now under the maple-tree;
In a voice like smitten silver
 To her sole self plaineth she,
And her tears are falling, falling,
 Like the leaves from the maple-tree.

The sunshine comes to kiss her
 All under the maple-tree.
Her cheeks are like wood roses;
 She's fair enough for three,
But she has no heart to listen
 To the bird in the maple-tree.

For she has shamed her sweetheart
 All under the maple-tree,
"And there is not one other
 Who truly loveth me!
We shall sit no more together
 Low under this maple-tree!"

He listens close behind her
 All under the maple-tree.
He's jealous of the sunshine,
 He will not let her be;

On two the leaves are falling
Fast from the maple-tree.

She's shy, but he is master
All under the maple-tree.
First tears, then smiles and kisses;
In sooth, 'tis fine to see!
And her heart goes singing, singing,
With the bird in the maple-tree.

1871.

TROTH-PLIGHT.

At first I thought God would have let me
Bring thee the freshness of my day;
So, haply, having earlier met me,
I might have gladdened more thy way!
So would our lives have grown together,
Sharing in common every weather;
Ah! then I did not know that we must wait,—
Must wait!

And what impulsive songs I sung thee
With morning's flush upon my brow!
What kisses from my mouth I flung thee,—
My lips are pale and pensive now!
Till I said, "Must I call forever?
And will he answer never, never?"
It was so hard to learn that I must wait,—
Must wait!

In the dark night my pride was broken;
I lay down mutely on my face,
And tears revealed what was not spoken,—
I found thee not in any place!
My soul was full of grievous wonder,

My heart-strings almost swelled asunder;
I thought that I could die, but could not wait,—
Not wait!

Then other hands were held out to me,
And others whispered, "I am he!"
And others came to woo me;
And yet thy face I could not see.
Then said I, "I shall never meet him;
God wills that I should never greet him."
And for a little I forgot to wait,—
To wait!

But swift and bitter came repayment,—
The fruit hung withered on the tree,—
And I must come in spotted raiment,
A traitor to my heart and thee.
I am not worthy thy caressing,
For I have forfeited such blessing,
Canst thou forgive me that I could not wait,—
Not wait?

Thou wilt,—since I have found no flavor
In all the gifts that others gave;
Their richness but provoked disfavor;
And if I die upon thy grave,
Know, that amid my faithless trifling
I had no power my heart for stifling.
Let me yet prove to thee I can wait,—
Can wait!

Ah! let no comelier form inthrall thee
By reason of its rarer grace.
Canst thou not hear my spirit call thee?
Hast thou no visions of my face?
Dost never passionate want come o'er thee?
Lookest never wistfully before thee,
To where I stand within the veil and wait;
Then wait!

ONE KISS BEFORE WE PART.

One kiss before we part!
But one, for love's sweet sake!
To sweeten, for my heart,
The pain of this mistake.
Your hand is in my own,
But your head is turned away;
For the first time and the last,
One little kiss, I pray!

Nay, though you love me not,
And stab me, saying "Friend!"
Nay, though I be forgot,
Before a fortnight's end;
Still, let me kiss the lips
That traitors are to love,
What! nothing but your hand,
And that within its glove?

Because the Past was sweet,
Because you are so dear,
Because no more we meet
In any future year,—
Be kind, and make me glad,
Just for a moment's space.
Think! I shall be so sad,
And never see your face!

One kiss before we part!
And so you nothing meant?
Though I be gone, your heart
Will keep its old content.

Nay, not your cheek,—your lips;
 I claim them as my right—
 Small guerdon for great love—
 Before we say good night.

Ah! shy, unlooking eyes!
 Not true, though blue and rare,
 How dare you feign surprise
 To know I hold you dear?
 What coyness will not yield,
 Yet boldness, sure, may take;
 Well, then; if not for Love's,
 One kiss for Friendship's sake!

One kiss before we part!
 One little kiss, my dear!
 One kiss—to help my heart
 Its utter loss to bear.
 One kiss—to check the tears
 My manhood scarce can stay;
 Or thus—I make it “Yes!”
 While you are saying “Nay!”

1869.

ENTRE NOUS.

As we two slowly walked that night,
 Silence fell on us, as of fear;
 I was afraid to face the light,
 Lest you should see that I loved you, dear.

You drew my arm against your heart,
 So close I could feel it beating near.
 You were brave enough for a lover's part,—
 You were so sure that I loved you, dear.

Then you murmured a word or two,
And tenderly stooped your listening ear;
For you thought that all that you had to do
Was to hear me say that I loved you, dear.

But, though your face was so close to mine
That you touched my cheek with your chestnut
hair,
I wouldn't my lips to yours resign;
And yet—loved you,—I loved you, dear.

And all at once you were cold and pale,
Because you thought that I did not care;
I cried a little behind my veil,—
But that was because I loved you, dear.

And so you thought 'twas a drop of rain
That splashed your hand? But 'twas a tear;
For then you said you'd never again
Ask me to say that I loved you, dear.

Well! I will tell,—if you'll listen now.
I thought of the words you said last year;
How we girls weren't coy enough, and how
There were half a dozen that loved you, dear.

And I was afraid that you held me light,
And an imp at my shoulder said, "Beware!
He's just in a wooing mood tonight."
So I wouldn't say that I loved you, dear.

Not though I thought you the Man of men,
Chiefest of heroes, brave and rare!
Not though I never shall love again
Any man as I loved you, dear.

I have suffered, and so have you;
And tonight, if you were but standing here,

I'd make you an answer straight and true,
If you ask me again if I loved you, dear.
1870.

REFUSAL.

The dew is off of the full-blown rose,
And the wind will flout it before he goes;
And the down is brushed from the yellow peach;
And the purplest grapes are out of reach,—
And I am as sad as sad can be
That one sweet thing is no more for me!

Dear, my friend! it is none of these!
For after the wind will come the bees;
And the peach that ripens toward the South
Is just as sweet for an eager mouth,—
But I am as sad as sad can be,
For a sweeter thing is no more for me!

Shall I pluck for you the bloomy grapes,
Or the emerald figs of luscious shapes?
No! you but ask to kiss my hand—
Only to love me where I stand!
And I am as sad as sad can be
That these sweet things are not for me!

Why will you make me say it twice?
Leave my life to its own device.
Ah! you say that my hand is cold;
I say that my heart is numb and old—
I say, I am sad as sad can be
That Love, sweet Love! is no more for me!

But I?—I would love you if I could!
I would nestle to you in tender mood;

I am so weary of living alone,
 I needs must make this piteous moan.
 My soul is famished so utterly
 For the one sweet thing that is lost to me!

You should have come in the Long Ago,
 Before my heart went under the snow;
 You should have come while the daisies bloomed,
 Ere the sweet blush-roses were all entombed,—
 Before I was sad as sad could be,
 And Love, sweet Love! was the world to me!

Now, for the good I should receive
 I have so little left to give!
 I am ashamed that your love should lie
 Low at the feet of such as I,—
 Let me be sad as sad can be
 That this sweet thing is not for me!

Kiss me but once upon the brow!
 Promise to be my friend from now!
 Pity me that I cannot love;
 Pity me, all the world above—
 Leave me, as sad as sad can be,
 For the one sweet thing that is lost to me!

1870.

TWO SONGS OF ONE SINGER.

I.

COULEUR DE ROSE.

When he told me that he loved me,
 'Twas in the flowery time of May;
 I put roses in my ringlets,
 And went singing all the day,

When he told me that he loved me
In the pleasant month of May.

Still he told me that he loved me
In the summer time of June,
When the roses blushed the redder,
And the birds were all in tune;
And I blushed, because he loved me,
Redder than the rose of June!

Yes, because he loved me
I went singing with the birds.
All the day I listened to him,
In my dreams I heard his words;
Dreaming nightly that he loved me,
I was blither than the birds!

But I did not know I loved him
Till I found one summer day
That in telling how he loved me
He had wiled my heart away,—
Just by saying how he loved me
Through the long, bright summer day.

Still he told me that he loved me
When the roses, fading, fell,
And the birds had all forgotten
That sweet song I'd learned too well.
For I love him, and he loves me,
More than any words can tell.

II.

HERS OR MINE?

My sweetheart's eyes, they're bonny and blue,
Ah me!
But he's slow to wed who was swift to woo,
Ah me!

146 Sounds from Secret Chambers
Am I less tender, or is he less true?
 Ah me!

Down in the valley, a year ago,
 Ah me!
He plucked me a lily as fresh as snow,
 Ah me!
And he kissed me as never he'd let me go.

But the lily leaves fell out of my hair,
 Ah me!
Or even his hand has fastened it there,
 Ah me!
And a brown bird twittered "Beware! beware!"

We stood together again today,
 Ah me!
Just where he kissed into Yes my Nay,
 Ah me!
He hung his head and had naught to say.

Mignon's eyes have a sunny shine,
 Ah me!
And Mignon's cheeks are fresher than mine,
 Ah me!
For I get paler because I pine.

The dove has forgotten his last-year's nest,
 Ah me!
And it's his new love that he loves the best,
 Ah me!
My heart lies like a stone in my breast.

DOUBLE REDS.

She had one within her hair
And another on her breast.
We two saw the moon come up,
And the sun go down the west.

Pale, soft ripples, blown about
The young beauty of her head,
And their brownness lighted up
By one spicy Double Red!

She looked off across the sea.
"Sweets unto the sweet!" I said;
All the longing of my looks
Bent upon the Double Red.

That was in her hair, you know;
Kissing one, I kissed the twain.
She looked up into my face,
Half in pleasure, half in pain.

I had only kissed a flower
Lying loosely in her hair;
I had only smiled, and said
It was fit for her to wear!

But her hand was in my hand,—
One was flame, the other snow,—
And my eyes possessed her eyes,
With a "Yes" supplanting "No!"
Ah! I had not meant to ask;
I had told myself to wait.

But you know what falls when two
Walk upon the beach so late.

“No! you shall not run away!—
Tender, trembling little thing!
(Am I worthy to detain
This white bird upon the wing?)”

But the flower upon her breast
Drowned me in its deep perfume,
Drew me to the velvet glow
Of its Oriental bloom.

“Let us go!” I heard her say
’Twixt the clock-strokes telling nine;
But the flower dropped from her breast,
Like a message, into mine!

“Match for me the flower, Sweet!
Give the other from your hair!”
I had meant to ask no more;
But her face was over-fair.

“Nay! I will have all or none!”
’Twixt my hands I took her head;
Sweetest of the three her mouth’s
Darling, dainty Double Red!

1870.

QUITS.

I am the victor, Philip May!
You knew it the moment we met tonight.
You had not looked for such easy grace,
For our parting left me crushed and white.
My lips were curved in a quiet smile;
You had seen them stiffen with sudden pain.

Did you think, as you searched my eyes the while,
Of the times they looked for you in vain!

Did they tell you the story you hoped to read?
The tale of a lingering love for you;
Why did you quail and falter so
'Neath the level ray of your frozen blue?
Why did you drop your faultless voice
To the tender tone of the olden strain?
You cannot recall the early trust
Whose delicate life by scorn was slain!

You're foiled for once, my King of Hearts!
Mine was too high to break for you.
I might have proved you long and well,
Had I proved you noble and good and true.
But when you saw that the thing I loved
Was not you, but my soul's Ideal,—
When I knew you selfish and hard and cold,—
I had no fealty for the Real.

You are not my master any more!
Your thrall of the olden time is free.
The broken wing of the bird is healed,
And I scorn your pliant tongue and knee.
Have you forgotten your spoken words?
I shall remember them till I die;
My heart went down in the dust to you,
And low in the dust you let it lie!

You have mistaken me all the while;
I do not miss you nor want you now!
The lesson you taught me is potent yet,
Though it left no line on my open brow.
Clever player, of cunning touch,
The chords are jangled and will not chime!
Well, are the throbs of a tortured heart
Set to the flow of a pleasant rhyme?

But God, he knows that I had no hope
Ever to lure you back again;
And the wish went out with the Long Ago,
And never can come to me again.
How dared you dream you were dear to me,
Or speak of things that you should forget?
I blush to think a kiss of yours
Ever upon my mouth was set!

The love I bore you, Philip May,
Near killed me ere it died;
But one dark night the stubborn thing
Was sternly stifled and pushed aside;
And the arms of a true love took in me,
Whom you left to groan at your heart's shut
door;
I'm clothed about with his tenderness,
And wrapped from lonesome evermore!

LOVE ENTANGLED.

They were loitering along
'Neath a roof of evergreen,
Dropping now and then a word,
With long set pauses between.

"Here are violets!" and she stooped
For the little purple flower.
"O, how many! I could pluck
Double handfuls in an hour!"

He held out his hand for one,
Only asking with his eyes;
And she flushed to find her own
All too ready with replies.

So she lightly turned aside,
"Here is love entangled too!"
"Well is that," he lightly asked,
"Something very rare and new;"

"He is trifling!" and the girl
Held at once her heart in thrall.
"He shall see I will not come,
Fetch and carry at his call!"

When he, pressing nearer, said,
"Were you ever tangled in it?"
"No, I think not,—*Wintergreen*!
I can get in a minute."

In that little minute's space
He revoked his little plan.
"'Tisn't me," he sourly said;
"Likely 'tis some other man!"

Walking home at set of sun,
What was this had come between?
Each one sad and silent thought
Of the thing that might have been.

When he went away she laid
The young violets aside,
But the love entangled threw
From the window, open wide.

Ah! the flower she would not keep
Was the emblem of the thing!
Love entangled mostly thrives
In the lovers' early spring!

THE DOOR BETWEEN.

I know that it was mine own hand that shut it
And locked it,—but I threw away the key,
And so the door can nevermore be opened
That stands so grimly betwixt you and me.

Though sometimes I have fancied that I heard you
Pleading and knocking on the other side,
I would not answer, for my heart was sullen,
And made so cruel by my wounded pride.

And there are hours when I have knelt beside it,
Anigh to death for just one word from you;
And you, in turn, were proud and would not
answer
For anything that I could say or do.

And sometimes when I lie 'twixt sleep and waking,
I think the door swings back to let you in;
But when I spring to give you eager welcome,
I only meet the ghost of What has Been!

And often in my sleep my heart is asking,
“Where is the key? Alas! where is the key?”
And I arise and vainly try to open
The closed door that is 'twixt you and me!
1871.

AFRAID.

After singing, silence; after roses, thorns;
All the blackest midnights built o'er golden morns;
After flowering, fading; bitter after sweet;
Yellow, withered stubble, after waving wheat.

After green, the dropping of the shrivelled leaf,
 Like the sudden lopping of some dear belief;
 After gurgling waters, dry, unsightly beds;
 After exultation, lowly-hanging heads.

So I shrink and shiver at your proffered kiss,
 Knowing pain must follow on the heel of bliss;
 Knowing loss must find me sleeping on your breast:
 Leave me while you love me,—this is surely best!

Like the bulshless flower left upon its stem,
 Sweetening the thickness of the forest's hem;
 Like a hidden fountain, never touched of lips;
 Like an unknown ocean, never sailed by ships,—

Thus I shall be fairer to your untried thought,
 Than if all my living into yours were wrought.
 Hearts' dreams are the sweetest in a lonely nest:
 Leave me while you love me,—this is surely best!

1871.

ET TU?

Is this the end of all these years?
 Must we be strangers now, we two;
 Find you such sweetness in my tears,
 That you should choose this thing to do?
 That you should smite me unawares,
 And hate me when you find me true,—
 Is this the fruit your loving bears?
 I had not thought so ill of you!

Ah! looking deep into your eyes,
 I thought I read you through and through!
 Ah! listening to your stanch replies,
 How confidence and fealty grew!

Remembering 'tis your hand that tries
Our ancient compact to undo,
My blood is frozen with surprise,—
I had not thought so ill of you!

Perhaps a prouder heart than mine
Might lift a face of brighter hue,
Perhaps a bitterer heart than mine
Might wish some evil fate to you,
Perhaps a harder heart than mine
By word or deed might make you rue;
But I shall leave you this one sign:
I had not thought so ill of you!

1872.

YOU AND I!

We have plighted troth forever,—
You and I!
We have sworn no fate shall sever,—
You and I!
Young and poor,—uncaring whether
Life bring storm and sunny weather,
So we only stand together,—
You and I!

We've no hoard of crested greatness,—
You and I!
Naught of Wealth's nor Pride's elateness,—
You and I!
Spirits fitted for endeavor,
Toil our only worldly lever,
And a faith that faileth never,—
You and I!

Prudent friends may frown upon us,—
You and I!

Say that loving has undone us,—
 You and I!
 Say 'tis little less than madness,
 Thriftless marriages bring sadness;
 But they cannot cloud our gladness,—
 You and I!

O, we envy not another,—
 You and I!
 We're the world unto each other,—
 You and I!
 Perfect love, that knows no measure,
 This is our only earthly treasure;
 And we ask no other pleasure,—
 You and I!

All the world is before us,—
 You and I!
 And a tender Father o'er us,—
 You and I!
 Hand in hand, uncaring whether
 Life bring storm or sunny weather,
 We will face its cares together,—
 You and I!

1860.

SOMEBODY KNOWS.

How do I feel? I am fresh as the morning,—
 Happy and gay as its first early bird!
 Why do you look such prudential warning?
 I haven't said one exceptional word.
 What was I doing last night in the garden?
 It was near twelve when I entered the hall?
 O my severe, inconsiderate warden!
 Why, if you wanted me, couldn't you call;

Why did I slyly steal out to the arbor,
Leaving you sole, to a comforting doze?
I cannot tell you! I shall not tell you!
I never will tell you,—but Somebody knows!

O, what a pity that you were so sleepy!
Saw me come in? Is it really true?
So, my good aunt, you were playing Miss Peepy?
Well, now! I really wonder at you!
But—do you know that the full moon was shining?
O, do you know that the world was abloom,
In the cool arms of the midnight reclining,
Trying to hide from the swift-coming gloom?
This isn't what you would like me to tell you;
There is a secret, I see you suppose;
But I shall not tell you! I cannot tell you!
I never will tell you,—but Somebody knows!

So you are sure that two people were talking
Under the porch, where the sweetbrier grows?
So you are sure that two people were walking
In the green alley that borders the close?
O, but the night was surrendered to sweetness!
O, but the skies were so kind and so blue,
O, but my life was abrim with completeness,—
Glad as the rose in its dower of dew!
This isn't what you have asked me to tell you,—
But this is the way the narrative goes:
I cannot tell you! I shall not tell you!
I never will tell you,—but Somebody knows!

What do you say about conscience and blushes?
The sunset will tinge the most virginal snow;
If the rose I sat under has lent me its flushes,
Where is the harm, I am wanting to know?
The purplish mist loves the breast of the mountain,
The honey-bee clings to the heart of the flower,
The sunbeam illumines the spray of the fountain,
Each 'sprit inherits one exquisite hour!

Concerning the thing that you ask me to tell you :
 Ask the white calla the way that it grows!
 For I cannot tell you! I shall not tell you!
 I never will tell you,—but Somebody knows!

Sharp spinster eyes, growing dewy and dreamy,—
 So did you look, when you were but a girl!
 I can believe your complexion was creamy,
 That the sunlight was prisoned in each little
 curl!
 You have some love-waif to keep and remember;
 You've been a sweetheart, though never a wife;
 Looking at me, you are out of November,
 Back in the May of your angular life!
 Therefore you know it's of no use to question
 What was well said and done—under the rose;
 For I cannot tell you! I shall not tell you!
 I never will tell you,—but Somebody knows!
 1871.

DIANA.

Cast not my way those superficial eyes,
 Where no sweet languor lies,
 In whose wide glance thy shallow thoughts arise,
 As clear as speech'd replies:
 They lack the grace of grace,—the charm
 Of mirrored memories!

What if beneath each violet-veined lid
 Such sumptuous hints lie hid
 Of sensualized sapphire, diamonded
 With flashings that forbid
 The eyes of timid men to read
 Their tinselries amid?

Huntress of men! I spell thy trade aright!
Thou standest, in my sight,
Poor, 'mid the physical gifts that make thee bright,
And bare of heart's delight:
What wilt thou do when cometh Age's
Black, despondent night?

False goddess! what have I to do with thee;
Pass on and let me be!
We have no twin-impulses, such as we;
My gifts thou shalt not see
Upon thy crowded altar,
Fair Impotency!

Thou knowest the sound of laughter; never moan
To thee comes, spirit blown;
But, only for thy smiling, thou art stone!
Pass on! pass on!
Joy in thy sensuous bloom, and move
To tinkling mirth alone!

I would not blame thee for thy bearing cold,
If its smooth ice did hold
Something to win—some underthought, untold—
And not gross greed of gold,
And soul-degrading needs,
And trickeries manifold.

If but a worthier heart were manifest!
If to that classic breast—
So coldly classic, 'neath thy silken vest—
Might even yet be prest
That Prince of Men whose love to thee
Were all and best!

It will not ever be! nor thou outgo
Or break the hedgéd row,
By frivolous living fostered, sure and slow;
Thou canst not overthrow

The social frauds that round about thee
Rankly grow.

Thou of the goddess-front! thou, Circe-limbed and
rare!

Thou, made for men's despair!

Thou white voluptuousness, unshrunk by care!

Ah, fair! ah, false as fair!

Why dost thou haunt me, temptress,
Everywhere?

1868.

BLOSSOM-TIME.

It was in the time of blossoms—in the fragrant
time of blossoms—

When the bee came from the Southland, and the
trees were getting green;

And the earth forgot the winter, and laughed right
out for gladness;

And I heard the bluebird asking the swallow where
he'd been.

The wind, a minstrel lover, was flattering and coax-
ing

The shy young rose to let him unveil her virgin
face,—

Just to let him lift a corner of the green and jeal-
ous mantle

That lay betwixt his kisses and her brightly blush-
ing grace.

But the blue eyes of the violet had chilly tears
within them;

And the sick heart of the violet was withering with
pain.

For the wind had been her sweetheart before the
 rose awakened;
And now he had forgotten her, and would not come
 again!

And down the pleasant pathways I saw two go
 together,—
A young thing and her lover,—too happy to look
 back
To where a pale girl lingered, whose eyes were
 never from them,
Whose cheeks were like the snow-drops that died in
 March,—alack!

Ah, maiden! happy maiden! watch for the rose's
 bursting,
And pluck it at its reddest to glow within thy hair!
And thou—O pale forsaken! search for the with-
 ered violet,
And hide it in thy bosom,—its fitting place is there!
1870.

ONLY HER HAND!

Whenever I go to my window,
 And look out into the street,—
Look out across the pavement
 Crowded with hurrying feet,—
My eye travels up and over
 The house-fronts, dingy and dull,
That break in upon my dreaming
 Of the Land of the Beautiful!

Till it reaches another window,
 Just across from my own,
Where a quiet and lonely woman
 Sits all day, sewing alone;

And yet I have hardly seen here;
And here, from where I stand,
I only know she is sewing
By the motion of her hand!

Well, hers is an attic window,
So she sits close to the light;
And her hands are so near the casement
I can see they are frail and white;
With a ring on the third slim finger
Of the left,—so small and alert.
I think: "Is she weary of sewing?
Does she know the 'Song of the Shirt'?"

And what has become of the lover
Who came and wooed and won?
I see no man sit by her,
When her day's work's over and done.
I think she is a widow,
From the glimpse I get of her gown;
But she sits in the shade of the curtain,
With her amber braids bent down!

And I can't get a good look at her
For all that I ever can do!
There's only her pale, proud profile,—
And I guess that her eyes are blue!
She never stands at the window,
To look down upon the street,
Nor across at the opposite houses,
Or maybe our eyes would meet!

She has a pot of geranium
And mignonette on the sill,
And a cross is hung in one corner,—
Ah, hers is a cross to kill!
And to think I have never seen her,
Save here from where I stand;
But I'm sure if I ever meet her,
I shall know her by her hand!

I'd swear she's not over twenty
From the way she turns her head;
And the cheek that is next the window
Is all of a delicate red;
And my glass has helped me discover
A ravishing little ear!
But her hand I think the most of,—
It's her hand I hold so dear!

The hand that holds the needle
That goes in and out all day,
What wouldn't I give to snatch it,
And fling it far away,
That terrible tiny needle!
And take those two little hands,
And fold one over the other,
And kiss her where she stands?

I'm a fool, but I cannot help it.
It cuts me right to the heart,
To think of the life she's leading,
While mine is the pleasanter part;
Ah, dear little patient woman!
From the window where I stand,
I've learned to know and to love you
Only from watching your hand!

1869.

ENOLA.

What shall we do for the heart that is hurt?
How shall we freshen the cheek that is pale;
Strengthen the footsteps that falter and fail,—
Brighten the eyes of Enola?

The sunshine is out of the trail of her hair,
The waist in her girdle's too slender by half;

Gone is the ravishing, low little laugh
From the blossomy mouth of Enola.

Her necklace of pearls was broken today;
Some fell in her bosom, and some to the ground
Slid whitely and brightly, with never a sound,
Like tears from the face of Enola.

If the lover who left her should seek her tonight,
And put back the ring that she misses the most,
It would not stay on, but slip off and be lost
From the poor little hand of Enola!

1870.

UNAWARES.

The wind was whispering to the vines
The secret of the summer night;
The tinted oriel window gleamed
But faintly in the misty light;
Beneath it we together sat
In the sweet stillness of content.

Till from the slow-consenting cloud
Came forth Diana, bright and bold,
And drowned us, ere we were aware,
In a great shower of liquid gold;
And, shyly lifting up my eyes,
I made acquaintance with your face.

And sudden something in me stirred,
And moved me to impulsive speech,
With little flutterings between,
And little pauses to beseech,
From your sweet graciousness of mind,
Indulgence and a kindly ear.

Ah! glad I was as any bird
That softly pipes a timid note,
To hear it taken up and trilled
Out cheerily by a stronger throat,
When, free from discord and constraint,
Your thought responded to my thought.

I had a carven missal once,
With graven scenes of "Christ, His Woe."
One picture in that quaint old book
Will never from my memory go,
Though merely in a childish wise
I used to search for it betimes.

It showed the face of God in man
Abandoned to his watch of pain,
And given of his own good-will
To every weaker thing's disdain;
But from the darkness overhead
Two pitying angel eyes looked down.

How often in the bitter night
Have I not fallen on my face,
To sick and tired of heart to ask
God's pity in my grievous case;
Till the dank deadness of the dark,
Receding, left me pitiless.

Then have I said: "Ah! Christ the Lord!
God sent his angel unto thee;
But both ye leave me to myself,—
Perchance ye do not even see!"
Then was it as a mighty stone
Above my sunken heart were rolled.

Now, in the moon's transfiguring light,
I seemed to see you in a dream;
Your listening face was silvered o'er

By one divinely radiant beam;
 I leaned towards you, and my talk
 Was dimly of the haunting past.

I took you through deep soundings where
 My freighted ships went down at noon,—
 Gave glimpses of deflowered plains,
 Blown over by the hot Simoon;
 Then I was silent for a space:
 "God sends no angels unto me!"

My heart withdrew unto herself,
 When lo! a knocking at the door:
 "Am I so soon a stranger here,
 Who was an honored guest before?"
 Then, looking in your eyes, I knew
 You were God's angel sent to me!

1870.

DISOWNED.

Go, then, and a blessing go with you,
 Lost love of my sunniest days!
 Though the heart that I trusted rejects me,
 I shall think of you only to praise.
 Though the eyes and the voice of affection
 Are gifts that enrich me no more,
 And I meet but the look of a stranger
 Where tenderness brightened before.

If the love that I reckoned eternal
 Is withered and old in a day,
 I prize not the less its remembrance,
 Because it hath gladdened my way;
 And the scorning that seeketh to wound me
 Shall meet with no scorn in return;
 For the heart that is loyal forever
 In faithfulness only can mourn!

And yet is it love that could doubt me?
 And ah! is it love that could wound?
 In the rapture of rarest affection,
 How soon a dissension is found!
 Go, then, in the sternness of anger,
 With a bitter distrust of my truth,—
 Take back such a worthless emotion,
 And leave me the wrecks of my youth.

Ah, lost! but still, dearest, forgive me!
 My spirit is wrung to its corè,—
 Forgive me these selfish reproaches,
 I shall speak to reproach you no more!
 I will wait for the justification
 That cometh with thought and with time:
 And my life shall become an endeavor
 To grow to the needs of its prime.

I know I must love you forever,
 I know I must suffer a space;
 Like a child, in its piteous abandon,
 When it cries for its dead mother's face!
 God gave us this love for the human;
 Therefore it is good, and no curse.
 I will strive that this trial may leave me
 More tender and brave, and not worse!

1864.

AMY AT THE WINDOW.

Get you gone, O Day, so dreary!
 Creep into the arms of Night!
 And these scenes of wasted beauty
 Let the darkness seal from sight.
 Falls the rain in dirge-like cadence;
 Chaunts the wind a woful rhyme;

And such bitter, bitter memories
Haunt the sombre winter-time!

Vain! I cannot any longer
Put away the thoughts that rise;
I have battled long and bravely,—
I have worn a proud disguise.
But tonight my heart is weary,
And my courage ebbs away
With the tears that gush so hotly,—
Ah! I kept them back today.

And it makes me weak to listen
To the far-off river's moan;
And my pain is always sharpest
When I find myself alone.
Awful is this gulf of silence
Stretching 'twixt your life and mine;
Let me fall and die beside it,
Rather than live on and pine!

And I lift my soul in pleading,
O, so passionate and deep!
God! if I could only cross it,
On your neck to fall and weep!
And I kneel and send my moaning
Feebly to the farther shore,
Feeling that it will not reach you,—
Feeling you are mine no more!

Yet, O lost one! I forgive you
Those last, cruel, crushing words,—
I could kiss the hand that rudely
Struck my spirit's quivering chords.
I forgive you all my anguish,
All these weary nights of woe,
And the bleakness of my Future,
All because—I love you so.

But I never, never, wronged you,—
Never was in thought untrue;
All my holiest, highest heart-throbs,
And the inmost, were for you.
When they leave me cold and silent,
When this passionate pain is past,
You will know how much I loved you,—
Know me loyal to the last!

1860.

RUSE DE GUERRE.

So, Walter, it seems you're offended,—
I'll own I've not acted quite right;
But is the occasion sufficient
To stir up your wrath in its might?
If you hadn't appeared so excited,
If you were not so easily teased,
I should never have gone off with Charlie,—
But you knew I would do as I pleased!

Great Mogul! am I your Sultana,
To come and to go at command?
How you could imagine I feared you
Is a thing that I don't understand;
If you hadn't assumed le dictateur
With such an imperial air,
I should never have thought of offending;
But your look,—it said, "Go if you dare!"

Shall I own that the mirth and the music
Of that night were all lost upon me;
Even Charlie's low tones were unheeded,—
Ah! I thought of one dearer than he!
While you were resolving to cast me
Beyond the confines of your heart,

I sighed, in the midst of rejoicing,
That you in the scene had no part.

One kind look—my heart would have softened,
One whisper—my tears had burst forth!
But your words in their bitter upbraiding,—
Ah! they stifled regret at its birth;
And my spirit, all tameless, rose proudly,
Indignation gave strength to each nerve:
I knew I was wrong, but, O, surely,
I'd done nothing such wrath to deserve.

Now, Walter, you know that I love you,
In spite of the notions you take;
And my poor heart is aching right sadly,
Yet I don't think 'tis likely to break.
'Tis a pity, I'll own,—and reads badly;
But I fear the material's tough,—
I'm not going to die, mon cher Walter,
Because—you don't love me enough!

You know you are perfectly killing!
Addie Bell is aware of it too;
She's tender and timid and clinging,
And then—she is dying for you!
If you love her, I'm perfectly willing
To let her slip into my place;
I never had half so much sweetness,
Nor half so much languishing grace.

So, Walter, you're welcome to dangle
Around that "dear amiable girl";
You're welcome to praise in my hearing
The tint and the twine of each curl;
You're perfectly welcome to whisper
The sweetest of things—when I'm by.
I'm content if you find your elysium
In the light of her pretty brown eye.

You can't make me jealous, cher Walter!

There's no use in trying that game;
You might die of spontaneous combustion,—
'Twould be hard to put me in a flame!

So I think you had better consider.

Don't be rash, but come back while you can;
For I think—and am I mistaken?—

That you are a sensible man.

My position at present is trying;

Poor Charlie but lives in my sight,
And that handsome, distinguished Lieutenant.
Was very attentive last night!

And Addie told Lou, in a whisper,
She really preferred him to you.

Ah, Walter, he's terribly handsome,
And his eyes are so tenderly blue!

So you see how the matter stands, Walter;

'Tisn't Addie with whom you've to deal;
You can't work on me by your trifling,—
I can cleverly hide what I feel;

So if you're pretending, you'd better

Be wise, and come back while you can;
For I think—and am I mistaken?—

That you are a sensible man.

VARIATIONS IN THE SHAPE OF A SHOWER OF TEARS.

Come back if you love me, dear Walter;

I'm willing to own I was wrong!
I give up, for my spirit is broken,—

I'm missing you all the day long.
So, Walter, now, won't you consider,

And decide to come back while you can?
For I think—and am I mistaken?—

That you are a sensible man.

LAST HEART-BEATS.

Send me—if but a rose-leaf—yet a token,
To tell me what your lips have left unspoken,
That you are sorry that my heart is broken,
 Before I die.

For soon your silence will no more perplex me,
And soon your coldness will have ceased to vex me,
Although I cling unto the rock that wrecks me
 Until I die.

And presently my hand will cease its grasping,
And presently my breath will cease its gasping,
And I shall sink beyond your tardy clasping,
 For I shall die.

Ah! you have left me, who would never leave you,
And you have slain me, who did never grieve you;
But I?—at least, at least, I can forgive you
 Before I die!

1870.

A WOMAN'S COMPLAINT.

I saw myself in the glass today,
And I said, as I loosened my hair,
“O that my face were a talisman,
And he could have it to wear!”
For there is no thing that I would not give
 To fetter his restless heart;

And if his tenderness ever should fail
The glory from life would part.

I should not suffer so if I knew
That he missed me any tonight;
I wonder if ever he wants me now,—
I know that it isn't right—
I know it is selfish to murmur and doubt;
Is he careless or cold? O, never!
But they tell me that man forgets in an hour,
While woman remembers forever.

I love him! I love him with all my life!
And I give him its choicest things;
But he puts me into a gilded cage,
And cripples my budding wings!
I want to be all that a woman should be,
But he has the narrowest views;
I want to work, and he wants me to play;
And he tells me to do as I choose!

To do as I choose; I would choose to be,
Not a child, to be petted and dressed,
But his friend,—on the terms of an equal trust:
Respected, as well as caressed.
He gives me a kiss, and he goes away,
And that horrible office door
Shuts out the face and the voice and the hand
That charmed him a moment before!

And if he's troubled or sad or wronged,
He tells me never a word:
He likens me unto a summer flower,
Or a delicate singing-bird.
If he'd teach me, I know I could learn
To work with him, side by side;
And then I could hold my head up, high,
With a sterling womanly pride!

And so I am jealous of him I love;
O, jealous as jealous can be:
For his lordly aims and his growing plans
Keep him afar from me.
And I sit away by myself tonight,
Dropping the bitterest tears
That have moistened the cheeks that he left unkissed,
To whiten with cruel fears!
1863.

DISARMED.

O love! so sweet at first!
So bitter in the end!
Thou canst be fiercest foe,
As well as fairest friend.
Are these poor, withered leaves
The fruitage of thy May?
Thou that wert strong to save,
How art thou swift to slay!

Ay! thou art swift to slay,
Despite thy kiss and clasp,
Thy long, caressing look,
Thy subtle, thrilling grasp!
Ay! swifter far to slay
Than thou art strong to save,
And selfish in thy need,
And cruel as the grave!

Yes! cruel as the grave,—
Go! go! and come no more!
But canst thou set my heart
Just where it was before?
Go! go! and come no more!
Go! leave me with my tears,
The only gift of thine
That shall outlive the years.

Yet shall outlive the years
 One other, cherished thing,
 Slight as a vagrant plume
 Shed from some passing wing:—
 The memory of thy first
 Divine, half-timid kiss.
 Go! I forgive thee all
 In weeping over this!

1872.

A LOVE-SONG.

Sweet, sweet, sweet!
 Sweetest of hours, Beloved!
 When I thought but to kiss thy feet,
 Thou hast lifted me up, Beloved!

Sweet, sweet, sweet!
 To lie in thy arms, Beloved!
 And to feel the ecstatic beat
 Of thy heart of hearts, Beloved!

And sweet, sweet, sweet!
 To look in thy eyes, Beloved!
 And see myself there complete
 As my being in thine, Beloved!

Ah, sweet, sweet, sweet!
 For the rose of thy mouth, Beloved!
 Thou givest my mouth to meet,—
 I am come to my throne, Beloved!

1871.

FOR THE SAKE OF SINGING.

O the day when we two stood
At the gate, my heart and I,—
This side, Silence; that side, Song,
Saying, "Let us pass or die!"

On their mouths we saw their songs,
As the singers dallied by,—
This side, Silence; that side, Song,—
Exiles thence, my heart and I!

Ah, the heart was but a child's!
Ah, the child was but a waif!
And their struggle at the barrier,
Silence hid it—deep and safe.

We two lingering at the gate,
Since we might not hear, to see,
Fell so deep in love with singing
That my heart sang unto me.

And I, listening to its song,
Learned to sing as well as see;
Till I sang unto my heart
As my heart sang unto me!

We, self-taught, though older grown,
Have no skill in minstrelsy.
I but sing to you the songs
That my heart sings unto me!

O, DOUBTING SPIRIT OF THE AGE!

O, doubting Spirit of the Age!
Where hast thou led our wandering feet,
By pathways that at first were sweet,
With silver voice of persiflage?

What place is this to which, through rose
And laurel thickets, we are come,
Where, all at once amazed and dumb,
We stand, while fear upon us grows?

What place is this? Each leafy nook
Had seemed to harbor lonesome nymphs;
Ever it seemed that we could glimpse
A faun beside each shadowed brook.

A faun, with sharply pointed ears;
Queer-hoofed, with shaggy thighs and groins;
Wild-eyed and brown, with unclothed loins
Shy-peering, full of lurking fears.

What place is this? What place is this;
What mean these whitely bleaching bones?
What mean these half-heard, far-off moans?
This is Arcadia. What's amiss?

Backward and downward we are come;
The fate of all who ever turned
Glances to where those altars burned
Whose sensual oracles are dumb.

Backward is downward! Set each face
Once more fair toward the onward sun,

Favored, if, ere his race be run,
We come into a lighted space.

A clean, clear well enlightened space,
Unvexed by shadows from the past;
Strange spells that bind the victim fast
In the old darkness of disgrace!



Laura C .R. Searing
(Howard Glyndon)
Taken in 1873

PART II.

At the request of the Author
as I have glanced over these poems,
and find them all patriotic, and
some very pretty.

A. Lincoln

August 29, 1864.

Written by Abraham Lincoln,
then President of the U. S. of America,
upon the proof sheets of "Idylls of
Rattle" and transferred by my hand
to this published copy of the same.

Laura C. Redden

Clarke Institution (Howard Glynndon)
Northampton Massachusetts, U. S. of America.
March 25-1872.

IDYLS OF BATTLE
AND
POEMS OF THE REBELLION.

God! how this land grows rich in loyal blood
 Poured out upon it to its utmost length;
The incense of a nation's sacrifice—
 The wrested offering of a nation's strength!

It is the costliest land beneath the sun!
 'Tis priceless, purchaseless! And not a rood
But hath its title written clear, and signed
 In some slain hero's consecrated blood!

To One
Whose Quiet Words of Praise Would Make Me Proudest
of All! but Whose Name Is Too Sacred to Be
Written Upon This Page:
Who was to My Past, in the Highest Sense of the Words,
Friend and Counsellor,
And Whose Presence in the Hereafter Will Be
Dearest to Me, After God's,
I Consecrate This,
My First Endeavor.

Shall not the earnest spirit plead for the untried hand?

HOWARD GLYNDON.

New York, 1864.

IDYLS OF BATTLE

IN TIME OF WAR.

There are white faces in each sunny street,
And signs of trouble meet us everywhere;
The nation's pulse hath an unsteady beat,
For scents of battle foul the summer air.

A thrill goes through the city's busy life,
And then — as when a strong man stints his
breath—

A stillness comes; and each one in his place
Waits for the news of triumph, loss, and death.

The "Extras" fall like rain upon a drought,
And startled people crowd around the board
Whereon the nation's sum of loss or gain
In rude and hurried characters is scored.

Perhaps it is a glorious triumph-gleam—
An earnest of our Future's recompense;
Perhaps it is a story of defeat,
Which smiteth like a fatal pestilence.

But whether Failure darkens all the land,
Or whether Victory sets its blood ablaze,
An awful cry, a mighty throb of pain,
Shall scare the sweetness from these summer days.
Young hearts shall bleed, and older hearts shall
break,

A sense of loss shall be in many a place;
And oh, the bitter nights! the weary days!
The sharp desire for many a buried face!

God! how this land grows rich in loyal blood,
Poured out upon it to its utmost length!
The incense of a people's sacrifice,—
The wrested offering of a people's strength!

It is the costliest land beneath the sun!
'Tis priceless, purchaseless! And not a rood
But hath its title written clear and signed
In some slain hero's consecrated blood.

And not a flower that gems its mellowing soil
But thriveth well beneath the holy dew
Of tears, that ease a nation's straining heart,
When the Lord of battles smites it through and
through.

1863.

LEFT ON THE BATTLE-FIELD.

Oh, my darling! my darling! never to feel
Your hand going over my hair!
Never to lie in your arms again,—
Never to know where you are!
Oh, the weary miles that stretch between
My feet and the battle-ground,
Where all that is left of my dearest hope
Lies under some yellow mound!

It is but little I might have done
To lighten your parting pain;
But 'tis bitter to think that you died alone
Out in the dark and the rain!
Oh, my hero love!—to have kissed the pain
And the mist from your fading eyes!
To have saved one only passionate look
To sweeten these memories!

And thinking of all, I am strangely stunned,
And cannot believe you dead.
You loved me, dear! And I loved you dear!
And your letter lies there, unread!
You are not dead! You are not dead!
God never could will it so—
To craze my brain and break my heart
And shatter my life—I know!

Dead! dead! and never a word,
Never a look for me!
Dead! dead! and our marriage-day
Never on earth to be!
I am left alone, and the world is changed,
So dress me in bridal white,
And lay me away in some quiet place
Out of the hateful light.

1863.

TO THE EARNEST THINKERS.

If the mist of failure, gray,
Cloud the breaking of the day,
For whose coming all the waiting millions pray,—
If misgivings dull and rust
The first brightness of their trust,—
Let the earnest thinkers open up the way.

Show each brave, impatient soul
How the waves of failure roll
Back from brows that sternly front the waiting goal;
How the single-handed right,
In its God-anointed might,
Dares to meet and conquer evil's legion'd whole.

Show them how a brief defeat
Hath its uses pure and sweet,—

How it fires the brain, the soul, with newer heat;
Failure's lowest depths we sound,
Then, with terrible rebound,
Up the heights of triumph go our conquering feet!

Show them how the Truth is strong
When it battles with the Wrong,
Though the coward quail before the struggle long;
How the soldier of the Right
Dares the fierce, unequal fight,
Leaping fearless in to Treason's armed throng!

Earnest thinkers of the day!
It is yours to clear the way,
While our soldiers fight, our women work and pray;
Send your stirring words abroad
For the Right—for Truth—for God!
With the prophet's fiery spirit seal your say!
1863.

AFTER THE VICTORIES.

Ha! the wine-press of pain hath been trodden!
And suffering meed mantles high,—
The perfect, rare wine, wrought of patience,
It moveth aright to the eye!
Oh! dark was the night while we trampled
Its death-purple grapes under foot;
And no song parted silence from darkness,
For Liberty's Sibyl was mute!

And the fiends of the lowest were loosened,
To persecute Truth at their will!
They spat on her white shining forehead,
She standing unmoved and still!
The hiss of the white-blooded coward,
The vile breath of calumny's brood,

Befouled and bedarkened the kingdom,
And poisoned the place where we stood!

We,—treading the ripe grapes asunder,
With failing and overworked feet;
Alone in the terrible darkness,
Alone in the stifling heat;
With agony-drops raining over
Our weak hands from desolate brows;
With a deadlier pain in our spirits,
O'er whose failure no promise arose.

Shook the innermost being of justice,
Stirred the innermost pulse of our God,
With a cry of remonstrance whose anguish
Frighted devils and saints from its road!
All the pain of a long-martyred nation,
All its giant heart's overtasked strength,
In one Sampson-like throe were unfettered,
Standing up for a hearing at length!

And, even as we fell in the darkness—
Falling down, with our mouths in the dust,
With toil-stained and blood-dyed garments
That betokened us true to our trust,
When the laugh of the scoffer was loudest,
And the clapping of cowardly hands,
A glory blazed out from the Westward,
That startled the far-distant lands!

.

Ha! the wine-press of pain hath been trodden!
Now summon the laborers forth!
Let them come in their red-dyed garments,
The lion-browed sons of the North!
Not for failure their veins have been leavened
With the vintage of Seventy-six!
Nor unworthy the blood of our heroes
With its rare olden curren'ts to mix!

Ha! Conquerors! Come ye out boldly,
Full fronting our reverent eyes!
In the might of your glorious manhood,
Ye Saviours of Freedom, arise!
Come out in your sun-ripened grandeur,
Ye victors, who wrestled with Wrong!
Come! toil-worn and weary with battle,—
We greet you with shout and with song!

1861.

DE PROFUNDIS.

AFTER A DEFEAT.

Ah, God! shall tears poured out like rain
And deathly pangs, and praying breath,
And faith as deep and strong as death,
Be given—and all in vain?

Thou claimest martyrs,—they are given,—
What shall the stern demand suffice?
From out our darkened homes arise
Strong cries that startle Heaven.

We murmur not, enduring all
With broken hearts but silent lips;
With all our glories in eclipse,
And some beyond recall.

We stand beside our dead, our eyes
In patient sufferance raised to Thee,
And kiss the still brows reverently,—
Behold our sacrifice!

Behold our sacrifice! We give
The best blood of a suffering land!

A nation's heart by its own hand
Is stricken—that Right may live!

No failure this! God's own right hand
A victory shall write it down!
The years shall strengthen its renown;
Be proud of it, O Land!

Thou Christ! The Godhood of thy brow
Paled 'neath the throes of mortal pain;
But all thy glory glows again,
Thrice-haloed, round thee now!

Give us the martyr's steadfast power,
So, passing our Gethsemane,
Our glory shall but brighter be
For this, our trial hour!

1863.

FOR THE STRICKEN.

IN MEMORIAM.

O wistful eyes! that will not cease
From gazing sadly after one
Who went out in the dark alone,
Although ye say, "He is at peace!"

O hearts! that will not turn away,
But questioning stand without the door;
He passeth through it never more,
For he hath reached the perfect day!

Even when we thought him most our own,
His crown was nearest to his brow;
And he redeemed his early vow,
And passed, with all his armor on.

He turned to clasp a shadowy hand,
Unreal to our duller eyes;
He saw the gleams of Paradise
Break through the darkness of the land.

His gain exceedeth all our loss;
We linger on these barren sands,—
He is a dweller in the lands
Bequeathed the soldiers of the cross!

1862.

THE STORY OF SUMTER.

THEN. 1861.

Over sea and over city slowly crept the sullen morn,
All the splendor of its dawning by a growing
shadow curst;
And the sunless sky that sphered us nursed a
tempest yet unborn,
But we waited on the Battery* for another storm
to burst.
Grim, defiant, as some olden warrior clad in chilly
mail,
Sullen, signless silence brooding o'er its weather-
beaten face,
From its brow the vapor rifted by the freshening
eastern gale,
Saw we Sumter, as the grayness of the morning
waned apace.
Ha! the sluggish day is shaken from its stillness by
a growl,
The defiance of the Southron—spoken from the
cannon's mouth—
Blazes out the fiery ruin from beneath its smoky
cowl,

*The battery of Charleston harbor.

And within the walls of Sumter falls the gauntlet
of the South!
No response unto the challenge! Are they power-
less to defy?
But what flutters from the ramparts as the vapor
parts away?
Still their own insulted colors o'er the dauntless
heroes fly,
Flaunting all their braided splendors in the sullen
face of day!
Ah! behind those silent bulwarks, rising grimly
from the sea,
Waiting for the stealthy coming of the death-
dispensing shell,
There's a band of fearless spirits; guess how many
strong they be,—
They who stood so long and bravely, ere their
glorious banner fell!
Seventy men to man the ramparts and to work
each giant gun!
Only these to face the Southrons, who are seven
thousand strong!
Bravely toiled they from the dawning to the setting
of the sun,—
Bursting shell and shot around them in a cease-
less fiery throng!
Fast and faster belched the ruin from the sulphur-
our, yawning jaws
Of the seven Southern batteries, armed and ready
for the work;
All the day and all the night long well were plied
their greedy maws,
And until the second morning broke disconsolate
and murk.
Fire within and foes without them! Yet they
struggled long and well,
From beneath their blazing shelter holding out
against a host,

Ere the colors of the loyal from the crest of Sumter
fell,

And the gallant Seventy slowly left their well-
defended post!

April, 1861.

NOW.

Now the tender budding greenery brightens all the
earth again,

But the sprouting grass is reddened with the
angry bloom of war!

By the hearthstones of the nation only sounds the
wail of pain,

While our hero soldiers struggle in the glorious
fight afar.

Thy Nemesis, O Sumter! was the thrill that shook
the land;

When the tidings of thy spoiling brought the
nation to its feet,

Then was clenched, with stern intention, injured
Loyalty's right hand;

Its insulted front was lifted proudly up the taunt
to meet!

Murmur not in doubt, my brothers, at this trial rite
of blood,—

At this purging out of error from the arteries
of the land!

Never yet the walls of Treason the assault of Right
withstood;

Ere another year hath circled ye shall prove it
where ye stand!

April, 1864.

WATCH-NIGHT.

Did I frighten you, mother,—so white and cold,
And so silently here at your bed?
I could not sleep on this terrible night,
For the battle of which we read.
To think of the dead lying out in this rain,
Not minding its dreary fall,—
Of that mad, mad fight on the side of the hill;
And he—he was in it all!

They say he was foremost in every charge,
Till the hardest held their breath,
Or paused in the struggle to raise a cheer
For the man who was quits with death!
They say he was quiet and just the same,—
No paler when acting his part;
But I know, I know how he went away,
Stabbed even to the inmost heart.

But the fiercest pain for a tender soul
Is doubt and its jealous pride;
Though we do not die when we suffer so,
Till the faithful are justified.
I tore his ring from my worthless hand,
Denying my name of wife;
But I wear him yet in my heart of hearts,
And I love him with all my life.

I must go to him! I shall never rest
Till I falter before his feet;
And there I shall die if he raise me not,
And cure me with kisses sweet!

I shall die! I shall die if I may not look
Once more in my hero's eyes,
And see the fire of the olden love
In their passionate deeps arise!

I have wronged his truth, I have wronged his love,
And all for a whispered lie!
I have sent him to wander in search of death.
Ah, mother, if he should die!
I will suffer all; I deserve it all!
But, mother, I'm mad to go,
And beg him to take me back again,
For I love him—I love him so!
1863.

THE LEGEND OF OUR VICTORIES

IN '61-'62.

What, ho! ye valiant wrestlers!
Ye soldiers of the Right!
Full armed by Truth and Justice
To battle lawless Might.
Ho! I have glorious tidings!
Come, list the tale I tell,
How the cause of Union triumphed,
And the crest of Treason fell.

Too long this fair young kingdom,
The Empire of the West,
Had borne a blasting stigma
Upon her virgin breast!
Too long the brazen foreheads
Of a many-headed Wrong
Were lifted up in triumph
Above a murmuring throng!

And the leal heart of the patriot
Was heavy for our shame;
And we trembled for the glory
Of our country's growing fame;
But a noble-hearted pity
Held back the righteous blow,
For, alas! we knew a brother
In the face of every foe.

Our wise men, looking Southward,
Beheld the coming storm;
It had gathered, it had ripened,
While they sounded the alarm.
The pestilence grew fouler,
And no comfort blessed our eyes,
For the fiend that sowed this discord
Had flouted all disguise.

We all remember Sumter,
And the battle's growing hum,—
How the noise of tinkling cymbals
Was deadened by the drum.
Manassas stands a warning
To our Future from our Past;
And these skies that gleam so bluely
At Ball's Bluff were overcast.

Oh! then went up to Heaven
A strong and mingled sound:
There were curses, there were pleadings.
And tears falling to the ground.
And twin-born Strife and Treason
Went stalking hand in hand;
And our friends across the ocean
Spied the barrenness of the land.

But at last we turned upon them,
And stood in proud array;
In the West and to the Southward
Our thunders shook the day!

On either flank beleaguered,
Two foes our strength divide;
But Disunion, Fraud, and Ruin
Fell down on either side!

Bravely they worked together!
The framers of the lie
That teaches we have struggled,
And succeeded—but to die;
That teaches our achievements
And our growing hopes are nought;
That laughs to scorn the maxims
That our patriot fathers taught.

We sought to save the Union;
They strove to blot the name
Of Freedom's chosen country
From the royal scroll of fame.
We strove to save the record
Wrought out by sacred hands; .
But they to make their birthright
The prey of distant lands.*

Ho! planters of the South land!
Ho! yeomen of the North!
Ye who love our glorious Union,
Fling its banner proudly forth!
For the dastard front of Treason
Quails beneath this sturdy blow;
And if we stand together,
We shall lay the curser low!

We won't give up the Union!
Go shout it far and wide!
Missouri's head is lifted
Once more in queenly pride;
And Tennessee, unfettered,
At length may proudly stand!
Out with the hand of greeting,
All true hearts in the land!

And farther, farther Southward,
From "the dark and bloody ground,"
From the crimson fields of Arkansas,
Our triumph-notes resound!
And proudly o'er the waters
Our braided colors fly,—
That flag whose splendor gladdened
Full many a dying eye!

Shout for the glorious Union!
Shout for the triumph gained!
In the hour that gave it to us
The star of Treason waned!
Well done, staunch hearts and loyal!
We yet shall win the day,
And see this fell disorder
Pass from the land away!
Nerve! nerve! each good right arm again,
And forward for the Right!
And Union's stainless banner
Shall conquer lawless Might.

1862.

THE LAST WAR NEWS.

O pale, pale face! O helpless hands!
Sweet eyes by fruitless watching wronged;
Yet turning ever towards the lands
Where War's red hosts are thronged!

She shudders when they tell the tale
Of some great battle fought and won;
Her sweet child face grows old and pale,
Her heart falls like a stone.

She sees no conquering flag unfurled,
She hears no victory's brazen roar;
But a dear face, which was her world,
Perchance she'll kiss no more!

Ever there comes between her sight
And the glory that they rave about,
A boyish brow and eyes whose light
Of splendor hath gone out.

The midnight glory of his hair,
Where late her fingers, like a flood
Of moonlight, wandered,—lingering there,—
Is stiff and dank with blood!

She must not shriek, she must not moan,
She must not wring her quivering hands;
But sitting dumb and white, alone,
Be bound with viewless bands.

Because her suffering life infolds
Another dearer, feebler life,
In death-strong grasp her heart she holds,
And stills its torturing strife.

Yester eye, they say, a field was won.
Her eyes ask tidings of the fight;
But tell her of the dead alone
Who lay out in the night.

In mercy tell her that his name
Was not upon that fatal list;
That not among the heaps of slain
Dumb are the lips she's kissed!

O poor pale child! O woman heart!
Its weakness triumphed o'er by strength!
Love teaching pain discipline's art,
And conquering at length!

MITCHELL.

Written at the time of his victories in the Southwest.

Mitchell! strong brain, quick eye, and steady hand,
Faithful in service, faultless in command;
Thou favorite son of science! fit to stand
Foremost among the Saviours of the land;

In that the scholar's craft, the captain's skill,
In thee conjoined, work fitting triumphs still;
And nobler yet the patriotic thrill
Which guides the master-triumphs of thy will!

God! with a handful of such hearted men
To beard the wolf of Treason in his den,—
Men quick to plan and strong to act,—and then
Europe shall ring our triumph back again!

Onward, my hero! Men shall catch the flame
Which lights thy soul, and glows again for shame.
With thee, and such as thee, we shall reclaim
The morning glory of our empire's fame!

1862.

THE FALL OF LEXINGTON, MISSOURI.

[On this occasion the Rebels tore down the Federal flag, and trampled it in the dust.]

And what though the crest of a brazen revolt
Is reared for the moment in insolent joy
O'er the sanctified front of our glorious cause,
Whose hope and existence ye burn to destroy?

The banner whose folds ye have trailed in the dust
Is sacred in spite of your dastardly hands;
And the tale of your cowardly deed shall be told
With hisses and sneers in the uttermost lands.

In sooth, 'twas a valiant and soldierly act,
Befitting the spirits that marshal your clan,
To insult the old banner, whose folds were your
shield,
That looked on the hour when your glory began.

That flag is the type and ally of each deed
That gives you a right to be proud of the past;
And with it ye lay your inheritance down,
And barter its worth for a shame that shall last.

But the scorn that ye cast on your glorious dead
Shall arise from the ground that is rich with the
blood
That poured, for your craven and cowardly sakes,
For years in a holy and martyr-like flood.

Think ye that the parricide's labor shall thrive?
Think ye that the brow of a Cain shall be blessed,
When full in the eyes of a shuddering world
He stands with the red sign of slaughter confessed?

The nations shall rise in a verdict sublime;
The voice of their protest shall sever the skies;
And the pride-stiffened neck of Rebellion shall bow,
And the fire of contempt blast its insolent eyes!

Then shout o'er the fall of that glorious flag,
Exult in your shame, ere its punishment lowers.
Your children shall blush when they tell of the day
When you triumphed, but knew that the glory
was ours!

COME WE TO THIS?

[The Rebels have discarded the good old National Air of
"Yankee Doodle," adopting "Dixie" in its stead.]

What matter if its martial strains
 record the triumph-breathing story
Of early Freedom's well-fought plains,
 And valor crowned with bays of glory?
What matter if its sound alone
 Sufficed to fire the patriot's bosom,
And with each spirit-stirring tone
 Exultant hopes sprang into blossom?

What matter if its memory's twined
 About our costliest heritages,
And if in casting it behind
 We blur our country's proudest pages?
What matter if its tones were dear
 Unto the lion heart, undaunted,
of him whose fame is far and near,
 Where'er our country's name is vaunted?

What matter? Has each freeborn soul
 Become so strangely tame and craven,
Despite the floods of noble blood
 In which its native seed was laven,
That we can brook the dastard heel
 Of Treason on our crest of glory?
The despot's sneer, the traitor's steel,—
 Is this the ending of our story?

BAKER.

Thou lion-fronted, royal man!

Thou of the swerveless lightning glance,
Whose thunderous eloquence outran,

O'ertopped, the minds it did entrance;—
O man, made regal by thy might,
The many-chorded soul to smite!

The lowly path was not for thee.

Thy mental stature towered above
The wondering eyes, upraised to see

The man whose tone and glance could move
A people's heart to love or hate;
Whose touch could guide it like a fate.

The glory of his life was set

Unto a measure high and grand;
The lofty anthem lingers yet

In haunting echoes through the land;
And, greeted with a triumph-tone,
He stood, a conqueror—alone!

He fell;—and, lo! a mighty wail,

A cry, sublime in grief and strength,
Proclaimed the giant lying pale,

His mighty power undone at length;
And for that wondrous man and strong
Went up a nation's funeral song.

For him a high applauding tone

Shall linger in the halls of Time.

Even as he stood, he fell—alone,

A warrior in a strife sublime.

A nation raised his burial-stone,—

He will not sleep unsung, unknown.

OUR SACRIFICE.

[To those brave men of the Fifteenth and Twentieth Massachusetts Regiments and the California Battalion, living or dead, who took part in the battle of Ball's Bluff, this heart-cry is dedicated.]

Well, the hapless day is done!
Well, its bloody course is run!
Let a pall of blackness hide it
From the glances of the sun.

Oh! the cruel, cruel fate!
Oh! the help that came too late!
Here our first and great disaster*
Surely found its fitting mate!

Ah, the hearts that bled in vain!
Ah, the heaps of loyal slain!
Soft, my soul; be silent; add not
Curses to this bitter pain.

He,* the lion-heart of all,
Holding life and safety small,
If his country's clouded honor
Might be brightened by his fall.

Oh, ye steadfast! oh, ye brave!
Filling now one common grave;
Lo! the nation's bosom shrines ye
With the cause ye died to save!

Shall it, shall it be for nought
That this sacrifice was wrought?

*Bull Run.

*Baker.

Ha! the nation startles fiercely,
Burning at the craven thought!

Not until the hoary flood
That is purple with your blood,
On whose banks your scanty legions
Facing brutal slaughter stood,

From its ending to its source
Floweth free from Rebel force,—
Not until yon far blue mountains
Have been purged of Treason's curse,—

Will we stay the costly tide
From a bleeding nation's side;
Blood and treasure flowing freely
In an ocean deep and wide?

For a spirit is abroad
Bright and terrible with God;
And we mark the troubled waters
Where His burning feet have trod!

1861.

UNION FOREVER.

Men of America, press to your standard!
Foemen are gathering anear and afar;
Swear that your life-blood shall redden around it,
Ere from its azure there vanish a star.

Look where the demon of inward dissension
Is sowing the seeds of a terrible strife;
We who stood firm against foreign encroachment,
Are turning our hands against Unity's life.

Shall our blood-purchased glory vanish forever?

Oh! shall we shame the pure eye of the day,
With a sight of the ranks of our brotherhood
broken

Forever, and siding in hostile array?

Oh! shall the wail of the trampled and fettered

Go up from the uttermost ends of the earth,
And the down-trodden heads of the millions up-
lifted

At the news of our destiny's glorious birth.

Droop as the star of our Unity fadeth,

And the shreds of our banner are flung on the
gale;

While the eye of the despot shall gloat o'er the
record

That tells of our shame and our failure the tale?

How art thou fallen, O Daughter of Promise!

From the throne of thy lofty and virgin estate,
When thy children are drunk with the blood of thy
suffering,

And traitors are ringing the knell of thy fate!

Yet, there's a band of the stanch and devoted,—

Men whose integrity never was bought;
Deep in their leal hearts are graven the lessons
God and the deeds of their fathers have taught.

Strong in the might of an inborn conviction,

Only for God and the Union we fight,
Only to foil the designs of the traitor,
Only to vindicate God and the Right!

Union forever! Our God-given motto;

Union forever! our voices proclaim;
Union forever! our women and children
Rise and unite in defence of its fame!

Union forever! and death to the traitor!

Be the bright folds of our banner enrolled.
Show to the world that its stripes are eternal,
And its stars like the stars that the heavens en-
fold.

Union forever! Oh, sons of your country,

Swell the proud anthem that rolls from the heart
Of our forests of pine to the sweeping prairies;

Union forever! we die ere we part!

1861.

RESURGAM.

Let the nations talk!

While Freedom droops, with all her colors down,
With a great cloud upon her old renown;

While in the sunlight traitors dare to walk!

It is the boaster's hour!

It is the time that separates from the true

Those paltering fools who have not strength to do

One honest deed against an evil power.

For single-hearted men,

Who know no creed but Crusade for the Right,

Whom smaller interests sway not in this fight,

The Cross and Thorns of Christdom again come.

What time they stand

In pillory, while Ignorance may revile,

And Prejudice may sneer with bigot smile,

And Wrong be free to strike with dastard hand.

But not for long!

Is any night that waits not for its dawn?

From any work is God's good hand withdrawn?
Is any right o'ermastered by the wrong?

As the Lord liveth—No!
Above the night of this most sore distress
Shall rise the healing sun of righteousness!
The harvest is the surer, being slow!
1863.

ON THE DEAD LIST.

Willis Clare is dead, they say!
Mother read it out to-day,
But I met the words half-way.

Did I tremble? Did I faint?
Did I utter any plaint?
I was patient as a saint.

So I grappled without sign
With this master woe of mine;
Pride can brace us more than wine.

Prudent, was I? Let me die!
Ah! I cannot act a lie,
'Neath the pure night's starry eye!

Oh, to think this summer night,
That he lies so cold and white!
He—the bravest in the fight!

And my name was on his lips
When his blue eyes met eclipse
'Neath death's icy finger-tips.

Christ in heaven! I would have died
Glad, and proud, and satisfied
For that last hour at his side!

Oh, this bitter, bitter woe!
Will the darkness never go,
And the pain that stabs me so?

I remember summer nights
On the Hudson's breezy heights,
Full of wonderful delights.

Now I watch not for his tread,
Though the stars shine overhead;
And they tell me he is dead.

I deserve this bitter one;
In my pride I bade him go;
And he loved me,—loved me so!

But my heart was full of pain
As the clouds are full of rain,
Though I would not turn again'

Do you know of any grave
Which the sullen waters lave
With a dull unending wave?

Over which the west wind weaves
Many a pall of fading leaves,
While it sobs and moans and grieves?

Some such lonely spot unblest,
Where a guilty soul may rest,
Somewhere in the distant West?

If such grave you ever see,—
Emblem of mute misery,—
Think, such is my heart in me!

BELLE MISSOURI.

[This song has been set to music, and universally adopted by the Loyalists of Missouri, in opposition to "My Maryland."]

Arise and join the patriot train,
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!
They should not plead and plead in vain,
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!
The precious blood of all thy slain
Arises from each reeking plain.
Wipe out this foul disloyal stain,
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!

Recall the field of Lexington,
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!
How Springfield blushed beneath the sun,
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!
And noble Lyon all undone,
His race of glory but begun,
And all thy freedom yet upwon,
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!

They called thee craven to thy trust,
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!
They laid thy glory in the dust,
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!
The helpless prey of treason's lust,
The helpless mark of treason's thrust,
Nor shall thy sword in scabbard rust?
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!

She thrills! her blood begins to burn!
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!
She's bruised and weak, but she can turn,
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!

Lo! on her forehead pale and stern,
A sign to make the traitors mourn,
Now for thy wounds a swift return,
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!

Stretch out thy thousand loyal hands,
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!
Send out thy thousand loyal bands,
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!
To where the flag of Union stands,
Alone, upon the blood-wet sands,
A beacon into distant lands,
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!

Up with the loyal Stripes and Stars,
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!
Down with the traitor Stars and Bars,
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!
Now, by the crimson crest of Mars,
And Liberty's appealing scars,
We'll lay the demon of these wars,
Belle Missouri! My Missouri!

1862.

DOUGLAS.

Stout wrestler for the trampled Right!
Good warrior in the desperate fight!
Strong champion of the Nation's cause!
Steel-true defender of her laws!

Oh, well for thee, the friendly clod—
Full six good feet of Western sod—
Should come between those honest eyes
And the foul deeds that here arise!

Well for the head that sleeps so low,
Unhumbled by the perjured foe;
Well for the lips that dared to speak
The truth that paled the traitor's cheek!

Oh, well that they are mute today,
When bigot fury holds its sway;
When Justice lays its front in dust,
And might usurps its sacred trust!

Well that the patriot's ear hears not
The curse of those by Power forgot!
Gaunt suffering, pleading for surcease,
Whose crying is a prayer for peace!

In that thou died'st with sword unbroken,
With cheek unstained by shame's hot token;
In that thou wert not like to them,
Who, seeing that they could not stem

This storm of Evil, Hate, and Wrong,
Bowed tamely with the cowering throng;—
Thanks! that the veteran's brightening fame,
Was saved this deep and damning shame'

Thanks! that his sturdy strength, unbowed,
Went out unshamed, unshorn, uncowed!
That, seeing wrongs he could not mend,
And brutish errors without end,

His keen and comprehensive brain
Was lashed to madness by such pain;—
So, falling with his harness on,
We are but glad that he is gone.
Thy sorrows will not haunt him in his grave,
O land, for which he died, but could not save!

THE SNOW IN OCTOBER.

The snow is falling abroad,
O'er meadow and moor;
Drifting silently, high and white,
O'er the sill of our cottage door.

It falls on a lonely grave
Lying away to the West,
Where a hero heart is mouldering away,—
The heart that loved me best!

I think of the closed blue eyes,
And the beautiful shining hair;
And the fresh snow heaped o'er one beloved,
Alone in the darkness there!

The aster's heroic bloom
And the maple's scarlet wreath
Are crushed alike by the cold, white hand
Of this terrible icy death.

Oh, cruel, untimely snow!
You have found him where he lies.
It was too early to fold your shroud
Over my soldier's eyes.

I could bear to leave him alone
With the sweet south wind and the flowers,
But not with the snow and the blighted leaves
Of these desolate autumn hours!

Oh! then I could think no more,
And the pent-up grief grew wild,

And I bowed my throbbing, aching head,
And wept like a weary child!

And I said, "The world is cold,
And terribly lone and wide;
How can I walk its dreary way,
With no stay but my woman's pride?

"I shall pass by cheerful homes
Which Love hath made so bright,
But I may not stay; I must walk alone
In the darkness and the night!

"Moan, moan aloud,
O desolate heart of mine!
But spoken words can never give vent
To an agony like to thine."
The snow is falling abroad,
Silently, softly and slow,
But the tears that rain from despairing eyes
Fall faster than the snow;

.

I watched it through my tears,
Till the grief-throbs grew less sharp;
And I thought of a gleaming, golden crown,
And a sweetly sounding harp!

I thought of the Great White Throne,
And the shining robes they wear;
And the perfect peace of the purified ones,
And the glory reigning there!

.

The snow is falling abroad,
Tenderly, soft and slow;
And the quiet throbs of my heart keep time
To the musical fall of the snow!

TO A HERO, WITH A SWORD

[McClellan in 1861.]

Take it! from a woman's hand:
Draw it! for a suffering land:
Sheathe it only when we stand
Shouting victory!

Childhood's lisp and woman's tears,
Pulse of pride, affection's fears,
Health of youth and strength of years,
Blend in this appeal.

And though we, who bid thee go,
May not with thee breast the foe,
Tears as dear as blood shall flow,
Champion of our homes!

Lo! our clinging hands untwine,
And no longer fetter thine;
For our land we all resign,—
So, we let thee go!

Take it! decked by woman's skill,—
She whose gentle min'stries still
In the hour of trial fill
Sternest souls with calm!

Take it! from a woman's hand:
Draw it! for a suffering land:
Sheathe it only when we stand
Shouting victory!

TO A PATRIOT.

Friend! In this fearful struggle for the Right,
Oh, brother-wrestler in our common cause!
Upholder of our rudely trampled laws!
Good soldier in the fight!

I stretch to thee a not unworthy hand,
In that my soul is large enough to know
And feel the mighty truths which nerve thee so
To battle for our land!

I give thee greeting through my rising tears;
I say, God speed thee on thy venturous way!
I say, if we should win this desperate day,
Through the thick-coming years

A voice shall utter how thy strength went forth
To nerve thine upright heart, thine honest hand,—
Thou, noblest of the brothers of our band,
The heroes of the North!

1864.

VICKSBURG.

Victory! Victory!
The resurrected Right shall stand,
A tower of strength unto the land.
And when our spirits faint and fail,
And long endeavors leave us pale,
Across the lists of death shall flash
That memory of rare renown,—

How for so many days and nights
We lay around the 'leaguered town.
Victory! Victory!

No transient, momentary gleam,
As fitful as a fever dream;—
The grand fruition of a work
Cemented into moveless strength
With loyal blood and loyal breath,
And triumphing o'er Wrong at length.
Victory! Victory!

Sure and slow! Sure and slow!
While the seasons came and went,
The iron man of swerveless thought*
Planned and wrought! Planned and wrought!
The waiting spring burst into bloom,
Nor saw the fated city's doom;
Midsummer's breath was on the air,
Before suspense was broken there.
Sure and slow! Sure and slow!

Victory! Victory!
Our triumph shook the very air!
One loyal, universal shout,
In which the Nation's heart went out
For Wrong was down, and Right was up,
And exultation everywhere.
Victory! Victory!

*Grant.

LOYALTY'S LAST EFFORT.

[He did not speak or move after receiving the fatal wound, until a comrade, bending over him, said, "What cheer for the Union?"]

Life's sands were ebbing fast,
And darkness wrapped his failing mind about;
And then in gloom, at last,
Memory's spent lamp went out.

And thus he lay,
While slowly dragged along each weary hour;
Knowing not night or day,
Suffering, bereft of power.

And Love its vigil kept,—
Love, whose heroic spirit faltereth not!
And one, his dearest, there in anguish wept,
Because she was forgot.

Dear hands were on his brow,
True eyes in anxious pity sought his own:
"Dearest! dost thou not know me now?"
Alas! he knew not one!

Another came,
Grasping his poor worn hand with cheering tone:
"Knowest thou not me?" The silence was the same;
He groped in gloom alone.

"One question more,—
Hath no last prayer for Freedom's deathless cause?
O patriot heart, so bravely stanch of yore!"
They bent in breathless pause.

And then, oh, then!

It seemed as if a blaze of glory bright
Had cleft the quickly gathering gloom in twain.
And swept away the night.

The dull eye gleamed,
The ineane face was lighted up with joy;
O'er all a grand celestial radiance beamed,
Which death could not destroy:

"God save the trampled Right!
God keep aloft our glorious Stripes and Stars!
Union forever! Comrades, to the fight!"
Ended were all his wars.
1862.

AN APPEAL

IN FAVOR OF A GRAND MISSISSIPPI VALLEY SANITARY
FAIR.

[Read before the General Assembly of the loyal men and women of St. Louis, convened at the Mercantile Library, February 1, 1864, by Professor Amasa McCoy, of Washington, D. C.]

Where the Mississippi's darkly troubled waters
Roll their tawny waves along;
And the South land's ever warm, but wilful daughters
Change to sighing all their song;
Far away from any help or friendly soothing,
They are dying, day by day.—
Without love or any tender hand for smoothing
The last frown of death away!

Who are dying? Who are falling in their places,
Stabbed by pestilence and want;

With a firm resolve upon their pallid faces,
Which Death can never daunt?
Who are tracking from the West land to the South
land
A free passage in their blood?
Who have never turned their failing footsteps home-
ward,
Nor faltered where they stood?

Loyal men, who make the sinews of this nation,
Who keep alive the throbbings of its heart!
Royal heroes! without thought of rank or station,
By the God of battles called and set apart!
The champions of this crucified Republic,
The flower and the glory of the land!
And shall no help nor any sign of greeting
Go to cheer them where they stand?

In hospitals and in camps, so thickly crowded,
They are suffering life away,
With no blessed touch of Home to balm and soften
The pain which maketh gray!
Oh, ye daughters! Oh, ye sisters! Oh, ye mothers!
Are ye haunted by their eyes?—
The weary, dying looks of sons and brothers,
Who shall never more arise!

Let us help them! We, who sit in careless comfort,
In our happy, cheerful homes,—
Shall we leave our brave defenders pining, dying,
For the help that never comes?
Oh! remember that the quiet of each hearthstone
Is purchased with their blood;
And for us they wear the cross and thorns of
Christhood
In their noble martyr mood!

Let us help them! Oh, ye hearts of loyal women!
For your hands is not the sword!

To heal and not to wound, your blessed mission,
 Handmaidens of the Lord!
 Be the Marys of this suffering Republic;
 Take your places at its feet;
 Ye are gentle, and your hands have skill in healing,
 And your words are pure and sweet!

Ye loyal men, who love the Nation's welfare,
 Help us freely, without thought;
 Strengthen well the hands by which this fearful
 ransom
 For Freedom's cause is wrought.
 Oh, loyal hearts! behold your country's altar
 Awaits your sacrifice;
 Through your offerings, the pledge of its redemp-
 tion,
 Shall its new-born glory rise!

1864.

TRUTH IS INVINCIBLE.

(VERITAS VINCIT.)

[Motto on the banner presented to a Regiment.]

Veritas Vincit! Our soul-stirring motto!
 All worthy to wave o'er the breadth of the world;
 The banner that bears it aloft is victorious,
 And never in sorrow or shame shall be furled.

Veritas Vincit! Our God-given promise!
 Before it the forehead of evil must quail;
 Though wrong may enshroud it, and guilt may
 becloud it,—
 A God is its author, it never can fail!

Veritas Vincit! In triumph proclaim it!
O knight of the holy, the pure, and the true!
O warrior! O poet! O Christian! O statesman!
O friend of the right here's a motto for you.

Veritas Vincit! There's life in its music!
Be it blazoned in glory on every true breast;
And leal hearts respond to its magical accents,
From the North to the South, from the East to
the West!

1864.

RANKED HIGHER.

He fell as a soldier should fall,—
He died as a hero should die,—
With his sword in his hand, and his face to the foe,
And the victory-flash in his eye!
And proudly, in spite of its pain,
Swells the patriot's spirit for him;
For the bays that we lay on this passionless brow
No frost of the Future shall dim.

He left us, too early, alas!
The valiant of heart and of hand;
But the tears of the pure and the blood of the brave
Must flow for the life of the land.
And say, shall the poisonous root
Or Treason e'er thrive in the soil
Now red with the blood of our princeliest hearts,
And rich with our treasure and toil?

Ye sons of your country, awake!
Take the path that your heroes have trod!
Your noblest and dearest have given their lives,—
Owe ye nothing to right and to God?
If your martyred are dear to your hearts,

Let them live in the blows ye shall deal;
Pledge remembrance of those* on the hilt of the
sword,
Whose hearts were as true as its steel.
1863.

THE SNOW AT FREDERICKSBURG.

Drift over the slopes of the sunrise land,
O wonderful, wonderful snow!
Oh, pure as the breast of a virgin saint!
Drift tenderly, soft, and slow,
Over the slopes of the sunrise land,
And into the haunted dells
Of the forests of pine, where the sobbing winds
Are tuning their memory bells;—

Into the forests of sighing pines,
And over those yellow slopes
That seem but the work of the cleaving plough,
But cover so many hopes!
They are many indeed, and straightly made,
Not shapen with loving care;
But the souls let out and the broken blades
May never be counted here!

Fall over those lonely hero graves,
O delicate-dropping snow!
Like the blessing of God's unfaltering love
On the warrior heads below;
Like the tender sigh of a mother's soul,
As she waiteth and watched for one
Who will never come back from the sunrise land
When this terrible war is done.

*The martyrs of Fredericksburg.

And here, where lieth the high of heart,
Drift, white as the bridal veil
That will never be worn by the drooping girl
Who sitteth afar, so pale.
Fall, fast as the tears of the suffering wife,
Who stretcheth despairing hands
Out to the blood-rich battle-fields
That crimson the eastern sands.

Fall in thy virgin tenderness,
O delicate snow! and cover
The graves of our heroes, sanctified,
Husband, and son, and lover.
Drift tenderly over those yellow slopes,
And mellow our deep distress,
And put us in mind of the shriven souls,
And their mantles of righteousness.

1863.

THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG.

The days of June were nearly done ;
The fields, with plenty overrun,
Were ripening 'neath the harvest sun,
In fruitful Pennsylvania.

Sang birds and children, "All is well!"
When, sudden, over hill and dell,
The gloom of coming battle fell
On peaceful Pennsylvania!

Through Maryland's historic land,
With boastful tongue and spoiling hand,
They burst—a fierce and famished band—
Right into Pennsylvania!
In Cumberland's romantic vale
Was heard the plundered farmer's wail;
And every mother's cheek was pale,
In blooming Pennsylvania!

With taunt and jeer, and shout and song,
Through rustic towns they passed along,
A confident and braggart throng,
Through frightened Pennsylvania!

The tidings startled hill and glen ;
Up sprang our hardy Northern men,
And there was speedy travel then,
All into Pennsylvania!

The foe laughed out in open scorn,
For Union men were coward-born!
And then—they wanted all the corn
That grew in Pennsylvania!

.

It was the languid hour of noon,
When all the birds were out of tune,
And Nature in a sultry swoon,
In pleasant Pennsylvania,—

When, sudden o'er the slumbering plain,
Red flashed the battle's fiery rain,
The volleying cannon shook again
The hills of Pennsylvania!

Beneath that curse of iron hail,
That threshed the plain with flashing flail,
Well might the stoutest soldier quail
In echoing Pennsylvania!

Then, like a sudden summer rain,
Storm-driven o'er the darkened plain,
They burst upon our ranks again,
In startled Pennsylvania!

We felt the old, ancestral thrill,
From sire to son transmitted still,
And fought for Freedom with a will,
In pleasant Pennsylvania!

The breathless shock,—the maddened toil,—
The sudden clinch,—the sharp recoil,—
And we were masters of the soil,
In bloody Pennsylvania!

To westward fell the beaten foe;
The growl of battle, hoarse and low,

Was heard anon, but dying slow,
In ransomed Pennsylvania!

Sou'westward, with the sinking sun,
The cloud of battle, dense and dun,
Flashed into fire,—and all was won
In joyful Pennsylvania!

But ah, the heaps of loyal slain!
The bloody toil! the bitter pain!
For those who shall not stand again
In pleasant Pennsylvania!

Back through the verdant valley lands,
Fast fled the foe, in frightened bands,
With broken swords and empty hands,
Out of Pennsylvania!

1863.

THE GRAVES OF GETTYSBURG.

[National Cemetery at Gettysburg.]

Let us lay them where they fell,
When their work was done so well!
Dumb and stricken,—leaving others
All the glorious news to tell.

All the yellow harvest field,
Cursèd with a crimson yield,
'Neath the thrusting in of sickles,
As the battle waxed or reeled!

They, with faces to the foe,
Lost to pain, and peace, and woe,
Armored in the inspiration
Of the old heroic glow,

Rushing grandly unto death!
Eyes ablaze and 'bated breath,—
Second-sighted for the future,—
Here they piled the trampled heath!

Here for Liberty they stood,
Writ their records in their blood,
On the forehead of the epoch,
In a grand historic mood!

Let us lay them side by side,
In their awful martyr pride;
They will slumber well and sweetly,
Spite of wailing far and wide.

And their story shall be told
When this Present, gray and old,
Loses each distinctive feature
In the Future's ample fold.

Well, the work was fitly done!
Well, the day was proudly won!
But,—this nook that bloomed with battle,
There's no rarer 'neath the sun!

Let us lay them where they fell,
When their work was done so well!
In the martyr's noble silence,
Leaving us the tale to tell.

THE RANSOMED BANNER.

[Asa W. Blanchard, Sergeant-Major Nineteenth Regiment Indiana Volunteers, was killed at Gettysburg, Wednesday, July the 1st, while rescuing the colors of the company, (which had been left behind when the regiment was ordered to retreat, four color-bearers having been shot down,) and which he succeeded in saving.]

Four times the banner of the free
Had lowered its front at Treason's will,—
Four times, victorious, from the dust
It saw our arms triumphant still.

And every time its folds went down,
A hero soul went up to God;
Yet swift the fatal place was filled,
And still our colors waved abroad.

The place was slippery with our blood,
Where we fell, fighting for our land!
We dropped about, like withered leaves,
And could no longer make a stand.

"Retreat!" We, chafing at the word,
Thrilled through and through with loyal shame,—
In sullen gloom we wheeled about,
Our souls with fierce regret aflame!

When one, a noble, fair-faced boy,
Whom Fate had nurtured for that hour,—
He ignorant of his high emprise,—
Sprang up, full-statured, into power.

The ancient thrill of prophet flame,
The spirit of our primal men,

Transfiguring our common clay,
Flashed through the youthful hero then!

"Our flag! our flag forever, boys!"
He tore it from the spoiler's hand;
One moment o'er his dauntless head
It waved,—the glory of the land!

And then!—young martyr of the West,
Our tears must drown the tribute-song;
But ever shall thy memory live,
While Right shall battle with the Wrong!
1863.

BRINGING HIM HOME!

[Col. ———, who led a charge at Pittsburg Landing, was reported to be alive and well at the very time when his body was being taken to his family.]

Why, mother! What's the matter? How you stare!
Why won't you let me see the letter, too?
Why do you hide it? 'Tis from Henry Gray,
And so there must be news from the battle-field,—
Perhaps a word of dearest Alfred, too!
He has not written,—he's too busy now,—
My brave! my soldier! loyal lion-heart!
Forever foremost in the advancing ranks.
He was, I know, among the very first
To front the foe and drive him from his lair.
I read it in the paper yesterday, how the stanch
Seventh
Swooped upon the foe, and backed their Colonel in
his brilliant charge.
And he? He was not hurt; they're sure of that.
I breathed not, moved not, till I read so far;
And then I fell all quivering on my knees,

Not to pray, but weep out all my thankfulness.
And then my life was shaken with the rush
Of the exultant blood that fired my face,
Because my soul stood proudly up and said:
"This hero whom his brethren honor so,—
This man on whom the nation's eyes are turned,—
Is mine, my husband!"—

What is it, mother? Nay! I'll see it too!
It is not fair to jest and cheat me now;
'Tis pitiful, trifling with a hungry soul.
Give me the letter. Why! how white you are!
No trifling now! I will know what it means!
"Bringing him home!" Dear God!—My life!—

What's here?

Bringing him home! Why should they bring him
home?

Why, what's the matter with my foolish head?
There's something snapped inside of it, I think.
Lies! lies! lies! I don't believe it,—not a word of it!
They've forged this letter just to frighten me;
There's some mistake, they mean another man.
Smile, sweet my mother! for the love of Heaven,
And tell me for my life's sake I am right.

The world's all dark,—my soul!
The day was bright a little while ago!
Well! well! I'm hurt so deep I cannot feel the
smart.

Let me lie down and hide my face somewhere,
In some dark place, and that is all I want.

No words! No words! You jar me when you speak;
I never want to see the light again!
He's dead, you say? Well, then, the world's all
dead;

Let me be dead, too!—

Bringing him home! My pride! my sweet! my all!
He wrote me he was coming; and all day

I sat and listened for his homeward feet.
He said, "Sweet wife!" one little week ago,—
His farewell kiss is warm upon my mouth;
And now?—They's bringing him home!
Why! there's his letter on the table there,—
His very last! and the tender hand that wrote
Will never stroke my nestling head again;
And when I kiss him he'll not kiss me back;
And when I suffer he'll not comfort me.
God! are you just? You knew he was my all!
And so!—they're bringing him home!
I wonder if the violets are all dead,—
His eyes were like them!
Well, if their roots are planted on our graves,
They'll blossom blue and thick, this time next year.
Oh, my dead soldier! Oh, my life's one love!
I think I could have borne it better if
You'd kissed me only once before you died!
Say, do you miss me, darling, up in heaven?
I want you so, that if God lets me go,
I'll leave the world to find you,—
I cannot wait until they "bring you home."

PREACHING IN CAMP.

The rich light
Fell tenderly and like a heaven-sent blessing
Upon the prayerful, upturned faces
Of a great multitude.

The musical swell
Of song sublime pealed out its triumph glad;
And my rapt soul went out upon the wings,
The viewless wings of melody, and left
This weary land,

And sought a glorious one beyond the stars,
Where life is love, and love is infinite;
Where shadows never come to dim the light
Of perfect blessedness.

The music ceased,
And looking up, I saw, through lingering tears,
A wan, half spiritual form,—an earnest face,
Whose greatest beauty was its intense look
Of self-devotedness.

He spoke, and then it seemed
As if that living mass had but one heart,—
One mighty quivering, throbbing heart,—
And each word pierced it through.

And strong men cowered
Before his searching words, and every eye
Was drawn to his, and helpless hands were wrung,
And tears welled up unbidden,—stranger guests
To eyes unused to weep, and the rent heart,
The mighty heart of that great multitude,
Sent up its terrible wail.

And then at last
He stood all silent, weary, pale, and spent,
And quivering with emotion. Not a sound
Was heard within the camp save murmured prayer

And stifled sobs and groans.
Until, with face serene and sanctified,
He raised his hands and said all solemnly:
“Now, let us pray.”

A holy silence fell
Upon us then. I know not what he said;
I know not how he prayed; I only know
I felt his words within my inmost soul,
And bowed in awe, for God was very near.

JEFFERSON DAVIS.

Traitor! Ye! Upon thy brow
Guilt's dark shades are lowering fast.
Fame! what is it to thee now?
All its serpent wiles are past.
Thou dost feel
O'er thee steal
Dire despair; 'twill soon dis sever
All life's joy from thee forever!

Traitor! Aye! What made thee so?
Couldst thou act this craven part,
Thus in hellish wisdom grow,
With no demon in thy heart?
He was there,
And each snare
Told upon thy weak resistance,
Till thy soul was past assistance.

For I cannot think a mortal,
With God's seal upon his brow,
Thus could stand within the portal
Of the Inferno; heavy woe
Thou wilt lay
On the day
When the fiend, with deep beguiling,
Brought thee o'er to hear his willing.

Traitor!—to the noblest, dearest
Interests of human life!
Traitor!—to the truest, nearest,
Who stood by thee in the strife!
All is o'er.
Ah! no more

Life, its hues from fancy taking,
Shall seem fresh with each awaking.

And thy sin shall haunt thy slumber,
Cankering all the joy of sleep;
And remorse shall make thee number
Every breath with anguish deep.

In despair
Thou wouldst tear
From thy soul life's hateful fetter,
Couldst thou hope thy lot to better.

1861.

THE PRESIDENT'S PROCLAMATION

AUTHORIZING THE MUSTERING INTO SERVICE OF COLORED REGIMENTS.

Lift up the bowed, desponding head,
O long-enduring race!
Let the meek sufferance of your eyes
Abash the tyrant's face.

Take courage, O despairing race!
The tides of fortune turn,
When white men take in kindly clasp
The hand they used to spurn!

Go into battle side by side
With men of fairer hue;
We will not hinder by our scorn
The work you have to do!

Despised, rejected, cast away,
Ye are God's children yet!
And on the foreheads of your race
His mercy-seal is set!

1863.

A GREETING FOR A NEW YEAR.

Come in! come in!
Thou shining messenger of God!
Untroubled yet by grief or sin,
Thy weary pilgrimage untrod.
Thy unsunned brow is beautified,
And crowned with glory by His grace;
He breathes the blessing of His love
Upon thy young, unwritten face.

Come in! come in!
For millions of impatient hands
Are stretched to draw the stranger in,
From sunrise unto sunset-lands.
The dusky children of the South,
With fair-haired Northmen, wait to press
Upon thy rich unsullied mouth
The greeting of their happiness!

Come in! come in!
And let thy brows be olive bound,
A hazel wand thy hand within,
And time thy footsteps to the sound
Of breathing lyre, in measure sweet;
So shall these notes of ruffian war
Die out abashed, in silence meet,
And Love become our guiding star.

Come in! come in!
And let thy song be sweet and mild;
So, haply, hearing thou shalt win,
And calm this storm of passion wild,
And bid this jarring discord cease,

To the grand chorus of our song
 Restore the missing voice of Peace,
 And crush the many-headed Wrong!

Come in! come in!
 We crown thee with our holiest prayers,
 Almost to suffering akin,
 For they are breathed through suppliant tears.
 We crown thee with a reverent hand,
 That gives its nearest, dearest gift,—
 A wish—that from our troubled land
 Thy coming may the shadows lift!

Come in! come in!
 We'll pledge thee in a draught divine,—
 A rarer, costlier ne'er hath been,—
 And Hope shall bear the blushing wine.
 It mantles with the high resolve
 Of many a noble patriot heart,
 No matter who may traitor prove,
 We trust in God and do our part!

1864.

A SUPPLICATION.

Dear Lord! our wandering feet
 Come to Thy mercy-seat;
 Oh, let Thy favor greet
 Our poor endeavor!
 Turn not away Thy face,
 Let not the dwelling-place
 Of Thy redeeming grace
 Be void forever!

God of the fair and free!
 We bring our cause to Thee,
 A suffering nation!
 Humbly, on bended knee,

Oh, hear! Thou wilt and must;
Thou canst not scorn our trust,
Nor tread into the dust
Thine own creation!

Hear us, our fathers' God!
Stay Thy chastising rod,
Our feet the ways have trod,
Of desolation.
Lay by Thy righteous wrath,
Preserve us free from scath,
Shine o'er our onward path,
Be our salvation!

Arise! Thy people free,
Erst as on Galilee
Bid these dark discords flee,
Thy triumph voicing.
Let all the earth arise,
With loud, exultant cries
Unite to rend the skies
With strong rejoicing!

1864.

THE VOLUNTEER'S RETURN.

Ah! you're come back too late, darling!
'Tis but to see me die;
Trust not this strange, delusive glow,
This brightness in my eye;
For see how lightly lies my hand,
How thin within your clasp,—
So quick and strong its pulses were
When last it felt your grasp!

This poor, unworthy face, darling,
Ah! hide it in your breast;

'Tis long since last my weary head
To its true home was pressed.
I only want to lie and look
Into your blessed eyes;
'Tis weary months since thus they shone
So free from all disguise.

And when I saw you march away,
Without one parting word,
While the brave hearts of your regiment,
By martial notes were stirred,
I felt the ice within my heart,
The fire within my brain;
And all my life since then has been
One long-enduring pain!

Ah, God! if I could live, darling!
Live but for your dear sake;
To think that I must leave you now,
My heart is like to break!
And yet 'tis not such weary pain
As when you went away;
Oh, I suffered and I missed you so,
Through every dreary day!

And then 'twas dreadful, when the night
Brought back your darling face,
And gave me in a mocking dream
Its dear, remembered grace,
To start and stretch my yearning arms
And clasp the empty air,—
To waken in the cold and dark
And feel you were not there!

To know that you were lost, darling,
To me forevermore,—
To know my soul's young life had shed
The freshness that it wore
When we walked together hand in hand,

And I looked up to you,
To read within your eyes your thought
Of all that I might do!

Too late, too late I found, darling,
You were the world to me!
My highest pride, no matter what
The careless eye might see.
But I never wronged you, even in thought,—
My pulse's lightest beat
Was yours, even as the faithful heart
You trampled 'neath your feet.

But now you know it all, darling,
You know that I was true,—
They could not stir one bitter thought
For all that they could do;
Within your strong and tender arms
This last time let me lie,
And tell me that you love me, dear,
Once more before I die!

I do not mind it now, darling;
Here, take my hand in thine,—
You may find a brighter fairer face,
But ne'er a heart like mine!
Oh, hold me closer, closer yet,
And kiss me ere we part!
I'd rather die and keep your love,
Than live and lose your heart!

OUR CAUSE.

IN 1861.

By all the undying memories of the past,
Which shall this hour of treacherous calm outlast,
We know we stand

Above an Etna of unquenched fire,
Which, soon or late, shall burst upon the land
In its resistless ire.

These gauds which deck its sod in gay array,
Must soon be torn away,—
The awful secret from its depth come forth,
To scare the wondering earth!

Because an evil power,
In one unguarded hour,
Guised in the folds of Freedom's virgin vest,
Crept into a great nation's peaceful breast.
None dreamed of inward foe;
And, working sure, but slow,
At length the Curse, with high uplifted head,
Defied, and sought to tread
Into the dust the friend whose heart its life had
cherished!

The soul of Treason came,
And breathed with breath of flame
On the cool waters of a nation's rest;
And Wrong walked through the land,
With overbearing hand;
And from the East to the resounding West,
Contention's brands flared out,
And Indignation raised the mutinous shout!

A band of frantic fools,
Gone mad upon the isms of the day,
Are Treason's chosen tools,
Drawn up against us, in a rash array!
Our equals, and our brothers yet,—but late
They seek to rank above us in the State,
To wrest from us a God-donated right,
By force of fraud or might.
Of all hope for the present now bereft,
What course to us is left?

But one. And yet,
We cannot quite forget
They are co-claimants in each blood-bought right;
That, hand to hand to Freedom's fearless fight
Their sires with ours went forth,—
Though, in the oneness of their patriot worth,
They knew not of a separate South or North.

And could they live
To view the fortunes of this desperate day,
We know that they would give
Their blessing to our Union's Rights array!
The cause in which they fought,
In that our deeds are wrought.
Our foes must understand,
No impious human hand
May dare their sacred compact set at nought!

But they who say
That hands of ours have lit this baleful fire,—
They wrong the lion at bay,
Mistake the impulse of our righteous ire!
No! loyal hearts bleed for the wanton wreck
That envy's hand hath made,—
To see our glorious star-crown pale and fade,
And Treason's dastard foot on Union's neck;
Even tears of living blood could not atone
The grievous wrong unto our Present done!

Be it upon the heads
Of those who sought to tread
The interests of their brothers in the dust!
They were recreant to each sacred trust.
Our temperate pleas were thrust
Back with insulting defiance to our hand;
We were driven to the wall,—
We must either fight or fall,—
No choice was left us but this desperate stand.

But, brothers, we are strong,
Clad in the God-born might which doth belong
To every soul that hath its quarrel just,
Not on the treacherous sand we plant our trust,
But on an enduring rock,
Which feeleth not the shock
Of each presumptuous and assaulting Wrong.
God fighteth for the Right!
He will our prayers requite,
And lead us from this darkness to thine light!
Oh, we could pray that Peace,
With its soft, silken ease,
Might settle down upon our troubled land,
And stay the impious hand
That would dissolve the band
That holds the jewels of our country's crown!
But be it life or death,
Soft words or defiant breath,
The motto of our banner gleameth bright,
Triumphant o'er the night,—
God and our life-blood for the assaulted Right!

IN 1864.

Oh, triumph-bells, ring out,
And voice the exultant shout,—
The anthemed chorus of a Nation's soul!
The tides of battle roll
Our Venture to its goal!

And, on the forehead of this war-worn age,
The Angel of all time
Shall grave a deathless rhyme;
We pause to turn the last unwritten page,
Whose story shall each unborn race engage.

MY ABSENT SOLDIER.

Evening shades are falling, dearest,
Night is drawing on,
And the sweet stars look out shyly,
Slowly, one by one;
And I count them, with my forehead
Pressed against the pane;
We did it once together, dearest.
Now I do so once again.

When I fold my hands, dearest,
To breathe a "good-night" prayer,
Whose name is it lingers longest
On the evening air?
Yours. And then I slumber softly;
For I know our Lord
Through the night's long hours of darkness
Hath you in His ward!

How much I think of you, dearest!
I know that very oft
My features rise before you,
And then your voice grows soft;
They do not know the reason
It thrills and trembles so;
'Tis the beautiful heart-music
That makes it sweet and low!

God bless you! my own darling,
 And keep you pure and fair;
 May the calm glory of your eyes
 Be darkened by no care;
 Your love, the dearest next to God's,—
 Your worth, my highest pride:
 Sweet angels guard your homeward path,
 And haste you to my side!

But if—ah, God! the bitter thought!
 You should not come again,—
 If you should lie out, cold and still,
 Among the battle's slain,—
 I could not bear such anguish, love,
 For all that I could do;
 I know my widowed heart would break,
 And I should perish too!

1861.

L. H. R.

Oh, soldier-heart! Oh, knightly soul!
 Thine is the noblest skill of all,—
 That keepeth strength, and blood, and brain,
 Responsive at thy country's call!

No thought of risk, no mean distrust,
 Doth mar the splendor of thy life!
 Unbound by any party creed,
 Full-powered, thou goest to the strife.

Why, let them strain, the paltering crew!
 Who toil for gain, and not for Right;
 True heart! true hand! thy deeds proclaim
 The man who makes the noblest fight!

1863.

MY STORY.

FEBRUARY 14, 1864.

Brave, generous soul! I grasp the hand
Which instinct teaches me is true;
This were indeed a royal world,
If all were like to you!

You know my story. In my youth
The hand of God fell heavily
Upon me,—and I knew my life
From thence must silent be.

I think my will was broken then,—
The proud, high spirit, tamed by pain;
And so the griefs of later days
Cannot distract my brain.

But my poor life, so silence-bound,
Reached blindly out its helpless hands,
Craving the love and tenderness
Which every soul demands.

I learned to read in every face
The deep emotions of the heart;
For Nature to the stricken one
Had given this simple art.

The world of sound was not for me;
But then I sought in friendly eyes
A soothing for my bitter loss,
When memories would rise.

And I was happy as a child,
If I could read a friendly thought
In the warm sunshine of a face.
The which my trust had wrought.

But then, at last, they bade me hope,
They told me all might yet be well;
Oh! the wild war of joy and fear,
I have not strength to tell!

Oh, heavier fell the shadow then!
And thick the darkness on my brain,
When hope forever fled my heart,
And left me only pain.

But when we hope not we are calm,
And I shall learn to bear my cross,
And God, in some mysterious way,
Will recompense this loss.

And every throb of spirit-pain
Shall help to sanctify my soul,—
Shall set a brightness on my brow,
And harmonize my whole!

By suffering weakened, still I stand
In patient waiting for the peace
Which cometh on the Future's wing,—
I wait for God's release!

A nation's tears! A nation's pains!
The record of a nation's loss!
My God! forgive me if I groan
Beneath my lighter cross!

Henceforth, thou dear, bereavèd land!
I keep with thee thy vigil-night;
My prayers, my tears, are all for thee,—
God and the deathless Right!

WAITING FOR VICTORY.

Nations may side with wrong;
 Right shall endure:
Justice may suffer long;
 Right shall endure:
Stubborn, and hot, and strong,
Traitors about us throng;
This our unaltered song:
 Right shall endure!

What though they battle well?
 Right shall endure!
This be their final knell:
 Right shall endure!
Eager their lives to sell,
Heroes who grandly fell
Lingered this truth to tell:
 Right shall endure!

What though the fight be hard?
 Right shall endure!
Be the day evil-starred,—
 Right shall endure!
Triumph, at first debarred,—
Victories in dawning marred,—
Fall back upon your guard!
 Right shall endure!

Stars that are fixed may fall;
 Right shall endure!
Darkness may cover all;
 Right shall endure!
Ruin may droop its pall,

This our unshaken wall;
 We, from behind it call:
 Right shall endure!

Let the world say its nay!
 Right shall endure!
 Let the false have its day!
 Right shall endure!
 Failure may block the way,—
 Error may bring dismay,—
 Fixed, through this long delay,
 Right shall endure!

1864.

CHARGE OF BLAIR'S BRIGADE AT VICKSBURG.

Ye glorious few, who blenched not, looking Death
 Full in the face, with eyes of proud disdain,—
 Who won a benediction from the land,
 Through such an offering of martyr pain!

Be proud, ye brave! God writes a victory down,
 And no defeat!—say traitors what they will,
 To you the world awards the hero's crown,
 To them a scorning sharp enough to kill!

Oh, souls sublime from wrestling with the wrong!
 I, a weak woman, scarcely dare to raise
 My voice, through tears, to swell this burst of praise,
 But that enthusiasm makes me strong!

LOST IN THE WILDERNESS.

[The Battles of the Wilderness.]

My love! my only love!
 Where lies thy head tonight?
 Oh, 'tis weary waiting for break of day,
 And for tidings of the fight!

Somewhere in a crowded camp,
 Or, mayhap, on a ghastly field,
 Is lying one whom my jealous heart,
 To death will never yield.

My love! my only love!
 But the rivers roll between,
 And the land, it stretcheth for weary miles,
 In summer beauty green!

My love! my only love!
 But the night is long and lone,
 And my heart goes out, through the dreary dark,
 With a sore, unsoothèd moan!

My love! my only love!
 But my arms are vacant yet,
 And the cheeks that are fading, because un-kissed,
 With passionate tears are wet!

My love! my only love!
 My life is a wearing pain,
 And its fulness of unshed tenderness
 Maketh it ache again!

My love! my only love!
 I will arise and go;
 To find thee is all that is left to me,
 If thy glory lieth low.

.

Alas! and she could not know,
 That the grass was springing green,
 And the rank weeds hiding a Something where
 A knightly soul had been.

Alas, for the faithful heart!
 Alas, for its yearning pain!
 He hath laid him down in the Wilderness,
 Never to rise again!

BUTLER'S BLACK BRIGADE.

So they will not fight! those branded men,
 Whose crime is a dusky skin;
 They are dark without, so 'tis fair to think
 The blood must be pale within!
 They will not fight? You have crushed them long,
 They've forgotten the way to turn!
 They have brains, and yet they remember not;
 And hearts, but they never burn!

So, they will not fight? You remember how
 They cowered in last July?*

They had done no wrong, but their skins were black,
 'Twas fitting that they should die!
 They did not fight, but they stand today,
 As stanchly as fairer men;
 They are helping you on to your triumph now,
 Who were hunted and tortured then!

*The New York riots July, 1863.

Oh, ye will not take in a kindly clasp,
The hand that is darker than yours!
And ye will not walk in a plainer light,
Nor bury these ancient scores!
Oh, shame for your senseless and narrow creed!
And shame for your savage hate!
And shame for the dulness that does not know,
Like ever will seek its mate!

'Free,' not 'equal,' for Mind must rule,
And Mind must decide the caste;
And the largest brain, though the lowest down,
Must go highest up, at the last.
What is it ye fear, if Mind must rule,
And the earth is so very wide?
Oh, shame for your shortness of mental sight!
And shame for your shallow pride!

So they will not fight? But the grim old man*
Will tell you another tale,—
For Pillow's their St. Bartholomew!
Sepoys of the South, grow pale!
Perhaps, when they hallow this common cause
With their thousands of nameless graves,
Your selfish hearts will proclaim at last,
They are men, and they are not slaves!

1864.

*Butler.

TO A. E.

[In prison at Richmond.]

There is a spirit in that small, slight frame,
 Which long captivity could never cow;
 And the eye, pent beneath that hanging brow,
 Would never blench before the barèd steel,
 Prisoner of Richmond! As thou standest now
 I see the prison-blight upon thy face!
 How didst thou suffer, in those long, dull days,
 And harder yet, those terrible still nights!
 No word from home! No wifely fond embrace!*

Long years of peace can never do away
 The memory of those pangs that turned the spirit
 gray!

*In one of the entries in this journal he says, "If I could only hear from my wife!"

 KENTUCKY'S CRITTENDEN

IN 1861.

He has given all!
 His heart, his soul, his strength, his manhood's prime;
 Be very, very gentle with him, Time,
 And let our prayers thy stern demands forestall,

He has given all!
 Oh, ripening head, God's harvest is anear;
 Oh, gentle eyes! so ready with a tear,
 A suffering's plaintive call.

He has given all!
Not vainly,—like some blessed household word,
Whose dropping quivereth on some tender chord,
His name shall ever fall!

IN 1863.

He is at rest!
'Twas like a lying down to peaceful dreams,
Lulled by the murmuring of summer streams,
To be awakened by the morrow's dreams.

He is at rest!
All noisy sorrow were unfitting now;
We drop no tears above this marble brow,
And to this late bereavement humbly bow.

He is at rest!
With reverent hands we bear him o'er the sod,
Where lately oft his trembling footsteps trod,
And leave him in this quiet with his God.

THE QUIET MAN.

(GRANT.)

There was no feasting when he marched away,
No patriotic speeches;
His calm belief in Right had placed him where
No egotism reaches.

He was above them all,—that motley crowd,
Enthusiasts and pretenders,
Who make long speeches, and who love to call
Themselves the land's defenders!

Then he went gravely, earnestly to work,
And lo, a great sensation!
For soon they found he was the only man,
With skill to serve the nation.

And so they said, "Among the men who aspire
To office let us rank you";
But he was neither fool nor knave, and said,
Decidedly, "No, thank you."

At last they gave up trying to make him talk,
And cheered for him immensely;
But he held quiet, and was not satisfied,
Unless he worked intensely.

"One still, strong man!" We've waited long for
him;
He lives by acts, not speeches.
Legions of talkers! do you heed the truth
His life-endeavor teaches?

H. T. B.

Be strong of heart, my genial, generous friend!
And falter not before this league of crime:
I hear the angel of the Coming Time
Cry to the nations, "This is not the end!"

I trace the patriot's self-forgetting thought
Upon a forehead where unselfish care
And noble toiling leave the marks of wear;
And generous feeling—pained or overwrought.

But yet be strong! It shall not be in vain—
This wrestling through the darkest hour of fate,

For we shall go through Triumph's lifted gate
To find our solace for this night of pain!

1864.

THE LAST POEM.

O brave and gentle-hero soul!
O spirit tender, tried, and true!
How could I close my record here,
Without one little word for you?

Whose stronger arm has held me up,
Whose stronger heart has strengthened mine,
Whose eye was always first to see
The meaning of God's deep design!

Whose deeds were noble, first and last,
As tale of ancient chivalry;
Whose sweet, exceeding faithfulness,
Made life so beautiful for me!

Whose teachings filled my spirit with
This strong, unfaltering belief,
That God's good hand will save the right.
Through failure and bewildering grief.

Ah! no caressing hand is laid
In commendation on my head,
My soul, dividing time and space,
Is leaning toward yours instead!

I cannot think it vainly yearns
To reach you, though bereaved I stand;
Though it is bitter pain to miss
The touch of your protecting hand.

Not lost, but absent! Will you take
These first-fruits of a younger soul?
You know how long ago God gave
Its throbbings into your control.

PART III.
LATER POEMS.



Photograph of Author, taken in 1893

LATER POEMS.

[As collected by the Poet's daughter, Elsa Searing McGinn, and which were not thought by the author to be of sufficient merit to publish, but her many friends and admirers have requested that they be included in this volume.]

Never nurse your troubles;
Fast enough they grow;
Don't need any cuddling
To start a first-class woe.

Never nurse your troubles;
Turn them from the door;
Often they would die outright
If a smile you wore.

Never nurse your troubles;
Turn a laughing face;
Oft a Don't Care drives them
Quickly from the place.

Fortune always singles
Out the grittiest one;
Make your daily muddles
Food for sport and fun.

DIPPITY.

Now comes Missy Minnikin,
Puts her nose against my chin,
Creeps up higher and peeps in,
From my eyes a wink to win.

Puts her paws into my hair,
With a funny little air;
For she knows I do not care,
Knows I think her doings fair.

O you little fuzzy foozy,
Full of entoozy moozy,
That it sometimes makes her boozy,
When she plays too long with Susie.

Come, you cunning little cat;
You're too fussy to be fat,
Springing out at this or that,
Just the color of a rat.

But as sleek as velvet grey
Is your shining fur today,
And you have a worry way
Even in your antics gay.

Often, too, your mistress thinks
When you're playing such high jinks
Of a lissome little lynx
Crouching on the hidden brinks

Of some forest's silent streams,
Going, gliding, as in dreams,

Where no sunbeam ever gleams,
And the white owl sits and screams.

Dippity her name is; Baby
Can't say Kitty—will not maybe—
Just as knowingly as can be
She calls Kitty Dippity!

Four Maples, November 3, 1877.

I am marked with thy sign,
I am sealed with thy seal;
I am thrall unto thee.
Thy glamor has won me;
Thy spell is upon me—
I am never more free!

There was an old woman in Washington
Who never could let well enough alone.
She went out in the rain,
And came home in pain,
And she said, "I will never do so again."
And she sneezed and she said,
"I've a cold in me 'ead.
Oh, I wish I were dead!
I've a cold in me 'ead."
And she soaked her toes,
And she greased her nose;
And she tied up her head,
And hopped into bed,
And continued to groan,
If I'd let well enough alone!"
This windy old woman of Washington.

UNTIL THE END OF IT.

Lord! not to lift the pain,
Not to be glad again,
Not to rise up when slain—
Only, not to complain
Of what's past healing!

Only, that I may bear
Bravely, and without despair,
The darkening of the air,
The probe, the laying bare
All nerves of feeling!

Only, that I may sit
In silence as is fit,
Through the chill night, unlit,
Until the end of it—
Of thy sore feeling!

ONE PERFECT DAY.

[Inscribed to Dr. S. S. Nivison.]

'Twas in the glory of the year,
I, suffering sorely, came to you,
As sad as though the fields were sere,
And not one iris blue.

You grasped me firm and drew me near,
True minister to the bruised hearts
And spirits sick in fear.

And when you led me forth and left
My head safe on Nature's breast,
How soon her mother's touches deft
Soft soothed me into rest.

For days it seemed as if my heart was dead
To all the freshness of the time.
I had not heart to lift my head
And look on June's sweet prime.

And when this perfect morning flushed
With freshest rose, the Eastern skies,
I felt a new life o'er me rush
And looked with new found eyes.

Upon the glory of the earth,
Upon the radiance of heaven,
Feeling what such a day was worth
Unto the soul, new shriven.

Seated beneath your purple shade,
How swiftly, sweetly flow the hours;
The winds were soft as spirits laid,
The meadow bright with flowers.

And so for you shall be the first
Glad song that leaves my unsealed lips;
Your sunlight breakes the night that long
Has held me in eclipse.

SONNET.

ELISHA KANE KENT.

God! What a soul it was that lit the eye,
And fired the blood of that thrice noble man,
Whose changeless motto was to "do or die";
Whose dauntless, daring spirit e'er outran
The poor, weak body; suffering 'neath the ban
Of the disease that sapped his strong young life
In its first glow. Methinks I see the wan,
Half-spiritual face and frail limbs, nerved for
strife
With the fierce elements. O! thou whose daring
foot
Pressed furtherest in the Arctic solitude—
Whose brave hand plucked the secret from the
mute,
Cold heart of Nature—the infinitude
Of reverent admiration fills—o'erflows my soul
With an enthusiastic joy beyond control!

ONE MORE ANGEL.

[Written after the burial of the infant son of Mr. and Mrs.
Ezra Canfield.]

Oh, where is our dear, little baby!
Our dear little dimple-cheeked baby!
Our sweet little dark-eyed darling!
With a voice like a white dove's coo!
And a mouth like a rose in the dew!

Ah! our eyes look in vain for our baby!
And our lips ask in vain for our baby!
And our hearts cry in vain for our darling!
Our hearts must just ache and ache on,
For our own little treasure—is gone!

Ah! Saviour! 'tis well with the baby!
And we know it was kind to the baby!
Love us, for the sake of our darling,
Stretch an arm for our souls to lean on,
Since our baby, our baby, is gone!

TO HARRY JAMES DWIGHT, SLEEPING.

[Aged 18 months.]

Harry! So God is good to you!
More like, so God is good to us.
For, thinking what a joy you were,
My words are better mended thus.
A day will come when you will read
The chanters that here I trace,
As bending o'er your cradle bed,
I gaze upon your sleeping face.

My darling little friend! For such
You have been ever from the hour
You laid your little hand in mine,
As white and perfect as a flower,
And gave me kisses from a mouth
Where heaven's sweetness lingers yet,
And smiled upon me with the eyes
In which unspoken thoughts are set.

My thoughts go onward, and I see
A sturdy, brave, bright-thoughted boy,

Still venturesome and shy by turns,
And thorough in his grief and joy;
And I should know him anywhere,
Though years should drift us far apart,
And I shall always keep for him
A loving and a loyal heart!

I say, "God bless you!" as I lay
This stealthy kiss upon your brow.
Dear child! Perhaps no more I'll see
You sleeping as I see you now!
But common folks will hardly guess
How much my simple words intend,
When I shall think of you and say:
"I've had a baby for my friend!"

"The Old Place," Stockbridge, Mass., August, 1870.

FOUND WANTING.

When I have met one maimed or blind,
Or cowering under tattered clothes,
All pitying thoughts have ruled my brain,
And I have leashed the pride that loathes.

So far, so well, but only half
God's law is written in my plan,
And mine is but a crooked staff
Unworthy any upright man.

The meagre heart, the scanty soul,
These move me not to generous tears;
My scorn goes out beyond control
To those who quake with selfish fears.

I teach my foot to spare the worm,
But will not help him from the dust;

And if he live not out his term,
My thought says bitterly, "'Tis just!"

Alas! these poorest of God's poor
Find no sweet mercy in my heart;
For them its guarded inner door
In welcome never swings apart.

The squalid brain, abject in thought,
The earthy sprit, bare of gifts—
If I could go to these unsought,
And show the Friendship that uplifts.

Feel pitying tenderness for them,
Shame one of them from sordid deed,
Some flower might ripen on my stem,
And sow good ground with saving seed!

The vilest deeds, like poison weeds,
Bloom well in prison air;
It is only what is good in man
That wastes and withers there;
Pale Anguish keeps the heavy gate,
And the Warden is Despair.

Although the ear its office fail,
Yet may the mind be strong and bright;
Though utter silence may prevail,
What stars make beautiful the night!

Eternal love and happiness,
That last sublimest recompense,
Waits all the silent ones to bless
Above the chain of sense!

THE IRREVOCABLE TRINITY.

O Love and Life, ye are too strong for me!
 Life is such anguish, Love is such deep pain!
 I feel like telling Life to go forever,
 And saying unto Love, "Come not again!"

And yet, I could not live without you, Love!
 And yet I could not love without you, Life!
 Ye two and I are three in one forever,
 Although my protest frets ye, like a knife!

GIVE.

Give! the earth says to the sky,
 And down drops the gentle rain.
 And what is the earth's reply?
 But to pass the gift again
 To the rose that secretly
 In her mother-breast hath lain,
 Till the soft shower whisperingly
 Wakes it with a sweet refrain.

But not underneath the sky
 Doth the sweet rose useless lie
 It was made to glad the eye
 Of the saddest passerby.
 Give! He seeing it will cry!

Underneath the bending sky
 Be thou the uplooking earth
 In thy heart all secretly
 Let the rose-root, Goodness, lie.
 Watch and ward keep patiently;
 God will send to call for it the
 Showers of kindness without dearth.

God who dealeth tenderly!
 Prove it, then, a rose of worth!
 When, all parched with misery,
 Some poor soul will cry to thee,
 "Give!" Then be thou like the sky,
 Boundless in thy sweet reply;
 Pass the gift, then, like the earth
 Help some good to struggle forth!

FORESTALLING THE IDES.

I saw a great tree on a mountain side,
 Its secret roots, by some mishap, laid bare,
 Flourish fictitiously, as if Despair
 Should mimic Hope with sheer strength of Pride.
 Below, men wondered one calm day to find
 That it had fallen, when there was no wind.

I had a vision of a man who drew
 A very poisonous shaft from his own breast
 With a firm hand, and smiled, and said, "'Tis
 best!"
 Then went his way in silence. No one knew
 How the hurt rankled. "He is well," men said;
 And while they spoke, he quailed, and fell back—
 dead!

Ah, when the tree is tall, and good and green,
 Our gazing gets no further than its crown.
 We reckon not of the treacherous ills unseen,
 That very soon shall bear its beauty down!
 When a great gladiator acts his part
 In life's arena, smiling at his task,
 The applauding world may well forget to ask
 If he is tired, or sick, or sore at heart.

Sumner, March 11, 1874.

FIRST AND LAST.

There is a small and narrow mound
That she has never seen,
A life went from her life to it
Last June, when leaves were green.

A life that lay so near her heart
Through all the months of snow;
The roots had grown around it, and
She scarce could let it go.

What can the father know about
The mother's brooding dream?
Ere in its own he sees his face,
How fast his fancies turn.

She sees the babe, the boy, the man;
Her frail life zones them all;
Like Mary, hears she the Divine
Unto his handmaid call.

She saw it only once, though months
She dreamed about its face,
The while she spent her loving on
His garments' dainty grace.

And all she had was one short glimpse
Before 'twas borne away
Of that small shape whose sun of life
Was one short natal day.

Ah, short and narrow mound! her heart
Goes out to sit by you;

The breast aches where his head should lie,
For all that she can do.

She thinks no mother's child can be
Like that first longed-for one;
She keeps thy portion safe for thee,
Her little silent son.

Unto the bud that never blows
But one heart gives regret,
For she who hoped its bloom to tend
Must fret about it yet.

Dearer to her than rarest flower
That bud which never opes.
Ah, little mound, thou art large enough
To hold a heart's best hopes.

SENIORITY.

Child! Such thou seemest to me that am more old
In sorrow than in years,
With that long pain that turns us bitter cold
Far worse than these hot tears.

Of thine that fall so fast upon my breast,
I know they ease thy grief.
I know they quiet and will bring thee rest,
Thou poor, wind-shaken leaf.

Ah, yes! thy storm will pass, thy skies will clear;
Thou smilest beneath my kiss;
Lift up the blue eyes cleansed by weeping clear
Of every thought amiss.

What seest thou, child, in these dry eyes of mine?
Grief that hath spent its tears—
Grief that its right to weeping must resign,
Not told by days but years.

Are these the eyes, sayest thou,
That are never seen to weep?
The veil falls from them. Knoweth thou not ere now
The stillest stream runs deep?

The bitterest is that weeping of the heart
That mounts not to the eyes;
In its lone chamber we sit down apart,
And no one hears our cries.

It comes to this with every deep true soul,
'Tis neither kill nor cure,
But a strong sorrow held in strong control
A girding to endure.

For no such soul lives in this troubled world
But, like Achilles' heel,
Hath in the quick a shaft too truly hurled,
Flesh growing round the steel.

For at the last the heart grows round its pain,
And holds it with its life,
So used we are, we hope not for relief,
We know too much for strife.

And this is why I kiss thy dear wet eyes,
Nor think thy grief so great.
Child that thou art, at any fresh surprise,
Thy heart springs to the gate.

THE CUP.

Away! away! with the charmed cup!
There's danger in its gleam,
And the circean spell, as it bubbles up,
Invokes but a fevered dream.
Oh! shun the board where the wine is red,
And moveth itself aright,
And the jest of the maddened reveler
Profaneth the holy night!

Oh, ye who have taken our sacred vows
To shun the unhallowed lure,
Hope's morning lustre is on your brows--
Oh, swear that it shall endure!
For yours is the magic talisman
That guideth the soul aright,
And the faithful since ever our work began
Have ever prevailed in the fight.

'Tis a goodly thing to look upon—
'Tis a goodly thing to taste—
But they on whom its work is done
Find the world but a dreary waste.
Oh! it poisons the soul—that red, red wine,
And it poisons the springs of life,
Till the father forgetteth his trust divine,
And the husband forgets his wife.

Quail not for the tempter's sneering words,
And never let friends prevail;
Though the voice and the smile be ever so dear,
'Tis better that they fail.
Refuse it from beauty's charming hand,

If beauty proffer the cup;
 Yea, even from the fairest in the land,
 If the tempter fills it up.

We are pledged to resist the fatal cup—
 We are pledged to reform a wrong;
 We are pledged to lift the fallen up,
 And temperance is our song;
 Our watchwords purity and love,
 And deathless fidelity!
 And a greeting for those who march with us,
 Wherever their homes may be!

THE EMPEROR'S RETURN TO MIRAMAR.

[1851.]

[Note.—I am perfectly aware that my views of Maximilian's fate, as here set forth, are not generally shared in the United States. I am to some extent a believer in the theory that the form of government should be adapted to the existing needs and capacities of the people, and that no nation should have a republic which is not ripe for it. I think that such a ruler as Maximilian would have been the proposition for a permanent Mexican Republic, since he went to educate, to lift up, to strengthen. In view of what we have seen since, I think we may say that Mexico could well afford to wait. I leave American interests entirely out of this.—Howard Glyndon.]

Five years have passed since last they stood together,
 In that fair Palace rising from the sea—
 (I saw it once in lovely April weather,
 And then it seemed a Paradise to me!)
 Five years ago, one bright Italian morning,
 Arm linked in arm, they trod those garden walks,
 Each striving to repress the wistful yearning
 Which saddened all their would-be cheerful talks.

There, for a space, their lives seemed enchanted,
 'Neath those rare skies—in the delightful air—

Love and each other! Nothing more they wanted!
 And they were leaving this sojourn so dear—
 Going afar, to try a fate uncertain,
 Among a people, strange in tongue and race.
 Ah! hapless pair! could ye have raised the curtain,
 And looked upon the ills ye went to face!

But these two souls were fitted for communion;
 But these two minds were worthy, each of each;
 But these two hearts, in well-assorted union,
 Were one in impulse, one in act and speech!
 So, each, while striving to sustain the other,
 With pale lips feigned a hopeful, parting smile,
 Both striving dim, prophetic fears to smother
 With many a blithesome word and cheerful wile.

So went they from the Palace Portal;
 So glided they across the summer sea.
 With steadfast hearts and constancy immortal,
 They turned to struggle with the Great to Be!
 "Till I come back," she said, and flung at parting
 A playful kiss, by gentle fingers waved.
 "Till I come back," he said, a bright tear starting
 The crowned Saviour of a race enslaved!

How one came back, has been too well related.
 A broken flower, flung from a storm-beat shore;
 Weary, forlorn, bewildered and dismated,
 The mazed wanderer sought her home once more.
 The pain was long—the conflict too unequal—
 Naught could avail the proud, high heart and
 warm—
 We know too well the sad and fatal sequel—
 How mind, not spirit, sank beneath the storm.

Now he, too, comes back! While I the tale am
 telling,
 There is loud wailing by the German shore,
 And guns across the Adriatic are knelling,

Saying that he hath returned forevermore!
Through long dull days of wretched leaden weather
A pale ship crept along the sullen deep;
But calm or storm he recked, nor knew not
whether—
That traveler in the ship, so fast asleep!

Slow months and silent, with the sky above him;
And with the turbid, moaning sea beneath;
Nor any rumor of the earth could move him—
His hands were crossed, his sword was in its
sheath.
Oh, Patient Pilgrim, o'er the solemn ocean!
Oh; conquered hero, wrapped from battle's toils!
Thy shut eyes waver not, for the commotion
Thy fall hath caused, on many a foreign soil.

The ocean rocks thee; but no more elation
Shall swell the heart so still within thy breast,
This widowed couch, the offering of a Nation
Whose ills thy friendly hand had fain redressed!
Of all the land they proffered thee was given
The paltry few feet, measured by thy fall;
And leaden balls, to pierce thy bosom, seven—
These were thy grateful gifts—and these were
all!

And now they send thee back to that fair dwelling
That crowns a height above the Adrian sea;
Now, soft Italian gales, its white sails swelling,
The ship casts anchor, where they wait for thee!
They wait for thee—she waits for thee, thy dearest!
Ah! chill the heart, where oft her head hath lain!
And cold thy brow! No welcoming smile thou
wearest—
'Tis doubly well that she is dead to pain!

Thou hast come back! Ah, rash, but noble spirit!
Thine ills are o'er—thy cruel griefs are o'er!

But they who loved thee, loss and tears inherit;
For here thy tread shall echo—nevermore!
But be content! Thou hast thy meed of glory;
No breath of shame upon thy 'scutcheon rests;
The indignant world hath blushed to hear thy story,
And history shall do a world's behests!

Italy, January 17, 1868.

There's a sweet spell
In its fresh winds and silvery-dropping rains
That conjures up again the bounding pulse;
And the outgushing thoughts which fled away,
So long, so long ago!

.

Type of that new life in the vast Hereafter,
Whose walls draw nearer with each setting sun—
Thou art, O Spring?

For I know
When I shall stand within its golden gates;
They'll all come back—the freshness of my youth,
The unbroken spirit, the untarnished prime,
The mounting aspirations, which were mine
Ere sorrow found me!

To fade no more—there is no Autumn there!
For in that glorious land 'tis Spring forever!

Oh, my baby! my baby! there's much you must
teach me;
There are problems that only your dimples can
solve;
And 'tis only through you that the best good can
reach me,

And 'tis around you that my best thoughts re-
volve.

Ah, dear little feet, I must sit down below you,
And try to forget all my trouble and pain;
For what is there left of my life dear to show you?
Far better to start right over again.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS.

Dear John, look up, and listen, too;
There are bells that ring for none but you.
I feel, I sense them in this pure air;
Look up and list to their music rare.
Dear John, look up!

You were not born to hang your head;
There are stars above you to be read.
Steadfastly fix your gaze on them,
And tonight remember Bethlehem.
Dear John, look up!

And life's petty cares will fade away,
And Alaska's snows seem mild as May;
And in your heart shall the joy bells ring,
And your soul spring up on a tireless wing.
Dear John, look up!

Christmas, 1906.

The years are gliding by, dear;
But since to me you came,
Each one has been so full of you,
Each might have been the same.

It seems but yesterday I saw
 You running to my arms,
 So full of eagerness and love,
 And all of childhood's charms.

And, though the years slip on, yet still
 You are my little girl,
 With loving heart and flying feet,
 And life in every curl.

And 'twill be always so, dear,
 Like your coming home from school;
 My heart will always be your home,
 And love the only rule.

Come back, dear ones! Come back to mother's
 heart!

I have missed you, O, so long. Dreary the days
 from you apart—

While olden memories throng about me,
 As I sit alone, and your faces as of yore,
 And I so proud, my babies at my knee,
 And home is home once more.

Come back, come back!
 Open always to you, my arms;
 There is no dearth of mother's love;
 My heart is always true.
 Come back, come back!

THE OPEN DOOR.

O little child that liest asleep,
A flower within thy hand half crushed;
To thy white nest I gently creep
To kiss thy cheek, rose-flushed.

Thou art, indeed, the very core
Of my heart's life; I cannot bear
Even to close this open door,
Since thou art sleeping there.

And now I never dare to read
Of little children that have died,
So sharp the pang that warns my heart,
My eyes must turn aside.

And so I leave these lines undried,
And, stealing through the open door,
I bend me gently at thy side,
And kiss thee o'er and o'er.

And even in sleep thou seekest my breast,
And healest its hurts while nestling there;
Thy baby head upon my heart
Can make it strong and brave to bear.

GUESSING.

My darling steals to my side as I write,
And I pause to smile on her winning ways.
"What is it?" I say, "my one delight!"
"Dear delight of my silent days!"

While her eyes give back the look in my own,
She gently puts her lips to my ear,
And I feel, though I cannot hear the tone,
In which she whispers, "I love you, dear!"

She learned it from hearing me croon it to her,
Through pain and pleasure, in year, out year;
Her cradle swung to the rhythmic stir
Of her mother singing, "I love you, dear!"

One life has grown up betwixt us two;
One thought re-echoes from each to each;
I read my heart in her eyes clear blue,
And hers lies ever within my reach!

And the heart of a mother can never mistake,
Though the ear of the flesh be cold and dead,
The ear of the soul is ever awake;
"So you want me to guess what 'twas you said?"

Thus, when she had spoken she looks at me.
I keep down the sudden tears that rise—
"And now what was it I said?" says she,
Suddenly turning solemn and wise.

Then I bend and whisper, "I love you, dear!"
While my eyes smile into her smiling eyes;
Then the laugh of both of us rings out clear,
And she says with a child's unfeigned surprise:

"I'm sure, Mamma, that you didn't see.
So, how can you know, since you cannot hear?"
"Why, I love my sweet, and my sweet loves me;
And I think it is very clear!"

Though its outer courts no sound may shrill,
The listening spirit divines Love's song;
While the heart waits still upon his sweet will,
If it guesses it never goes wrong.

WAR ECHOES.

FIRST THANKSGIVING ANNIVERSARY

AFTER THE WAR OF THE REBELLION.

[Celebrated in Paris, 1865.]

Thanks to the God of Nations!
 The trial hour is past.
 Our mourning Mother-country
 Lifts up her head at last,
 And sees her scattered children
 The inmates of one home,
 And takes them to her bosom,
 Nor chides them as they come.

Four times the years have brought us
 Then pleasant harvest time,
 But mute the reaper's carol
 And hushed the gleaner's rhyme—
 Another, costlier harvest
 Was reaped on many a field;
 The thrusting in of sickles
 Let out its crimson yield.

"Thanksgiving day approaches"
 Four times, we sadly said.
 "Give thanks!" It was a mockery.
 Our hearts were with the dead.
 Our hearts were with our country,
 She said in woful state,
 In ashes and in sackcloth,
 Forlorn and desolate.

And glancing sadly backward
Unto those pleasant days,
When peaceful were her dwellings!
And pleasant were her ways!
We wept like homesick children
For our divided land,
Where brother turned from brother,
Nor stretched the greeting hand.

Dear God! Our homes were darkened,
Our hearts were like to break,
And when our foes exulted,
What answer could we make?
But now the pall is lifted
And peace returns to life
And hearts so long embittered
In tears forgo the strife!

We, children of one mother,
Meet in a foreign land
To pour the wine of gladness
And clasp the friendly hand.
Thanks to the God of Nations!
The trial hour is past.
Our mourning mother country
Lifts up her head at last.

GRANT'S THE MAN.

Hurrah! Hurrah! for the man whose deed
Is mightier than his voice!
He's our truest friend in our need,
And he's the man of our choice!
Let those who sigh for inflation, sneer,
They may flout his fame and all that;
But they'll find in spite of each well paid jeer

We've taken their measure and all that.
 And all that, and all that,
 General Grant's the man for all that!
 You can't persuade us that we can shirk
 And that 'twill be all the same;
 You shall not gain by this dirty work
 And shoulder on us the blame;
 We can't afford to build up again
 The Confederacy and all that;
 So don't you see, it is very plain,
 We must play you Grant for all that?
 For all that, and all that,
 General Grant's the man for all that!

Hurrah! Hurrah! and a treble cheer!
 And give him three times three!
 He stepped to the front without a fear,
 And treason fell on its knee.
 And he's saved the land from a fouler foe,
 Your cursed inflation and all that.
 If he cannot blarney, he can say No,
 And put a stopper on all that!
 And all that, and all that,
 General Grant's the man for all that!

[Apropos of a gift of a crystal goblet that once belonged to
 Abraham Lincoln.]

Shall I ever dare to touch
 With my lips this crystal brim?
 If I ever, let me never,
 Without taking thought of him
 Whose pure life it typifies
 Unto reverential eyes.

We who proved him, and then loved him,
 We have nothing else to give,

Long as we shall love and live,
But these tears of homage—
This crown whose flowers spring
Out of blood drops that were wrung
From that heart that never any
Lords or ladies of the land
Fathomed or could understand
Until God's revealing hand
Lifted up its rugged cov'ring,
Showed it cold and still and dead—
That great heart that nobly bled—
Died for us! Kind soul, thy lightness
Was half lost, but all thy whiteness
Clung about thee to the last
And was never dropped nor passed.
There was naught to make thee linger
When God's lifted dread forefinger
Stopped the wheels and signed to thee,
"Come up here and rest with me!"

THE REASON WHY.

[During a playful discussion recently held in a private circle, on the cause of the failure of Mr. Buchanan's Administration, the writer was challenged to a poetical presentation of the case, and what follows was the result.]

All are lavish of their censure,
And the press throughout the land
Teems with with bitter, fierce invective
Of his feeble head and hand;

But though all are quick to blame him—
Though the critic's pen and eye
Scans each failing, they have never
Paused to ask the reason why—

Why the promise of his morning
Sinks into such clouded night—
Why the counsel of the faithless
Has beguiled him from the right!

But I, glancing o'er the record
Of his toil-worn, lonely life,
Pity, more than I can blame him—
For he never had a wife.

Sneer, ye fools! who preach that woman
To a lowlier lot is born;
Ye, who hold her sex but servile,
Laugh my simple words to scorn;

But we know how many heroes,
O'er whom triumph-banners waved,
By the pure love of a woman
From a darker fate were saved.

And we know how some have struggled
With a life but half complete;
Groping, stumbling by the wayside—
'Reft of woman-teachings sweet.

Man, in lion-hearted power
Sternly meets the darkest day,
But the small hand of a woman
Puts the briars from his way;

And her strength—born out of weakness—
Clinging to the Saviour's cross,
Bears him up through many a trial,
And through many a bitter loss!

And her faith that shames the angels,
Nerves her slender feet to go
Where his strong steps cannot follow,
Or fall faltering and slow.

She can see things that are hidden
From his proud, impatient eyes;
And her keen, instinctive knowledge
Pierces through all fine disguise.

So I think more gently-softly
Of this solitary man,
Walking, singly, through such mazes
Since his lonely life began.

Had her* head lain on his bosom,
Had her hand clung to his own,
Oh, what stainless, quenchless glory
O'er this clouded life had shone.

With her woman's love to temper
All the sternness of his strength
She had led him through the darkness,
Safely to the light at length.

Sad, forsaken, and uncertain
In his failing hold on life—
O! I pity more than blame him,
For he never had a wife!

*It is said that in early life Mr. Buchanan loved and was beloved by a sweet, pure girl. The opposition of friends broke off the match and she died not long afterwards.

LINCOLN'S RE-ELECTION (1864).

Well done! redeemed Nation!
Well done! victorious land!
Now, surely God shall set thee
Near to His right hand.
Now, surely Wrong shall falter
And all its forces fail,
When 'neath thy righteous verdict
Our home-bred traitors quail.

Oh Country, sorely smitten!
Sublime in greatest need,
The world is debtor to thee
Because of this one deed.
What thanks the Nations owe thee
The coming time shall tell,
For lo! the morning dawneth
And all shall yet be well!

No tear shall fall unheeded,
No sob shall rise in vain,
Although thy martyred heroes
Lie thick on every plain.
The dear God shall cherish
These jewels in his crown—
For their dear sakes His blessing
Upon thee cometh down.

From martyrdom to glory—
From trial unto state—
Out of the vale of weeping
Thou shalt go forth elate—
And hand in hand go with thee
A brighter, better peace
Than any born of slavery
Or nursed in slothful ease.

Go on, victorious Nation!
Go on, redeemed land!
Shake from thy skirts defilement,
And with the righteous stand.
Give thee in loyal earnest
Thy hand put boldly forth.
Once pure, thy God shall make thee
His viceroy on the earth.
Go on, redeemed land!

AFTER VICKSBURG.

Ah, God! shall tears poured out like rain,
And deathly pangs, and praying breath,
And faith as deep and strong as death,
Be given—and all in vain?

Thou claimest martyrs—they are given—
What shall the stern demand suffice?
From out our darkened homes arise
Strong cries that startle Heaven.

We murmur not—enduring all
With broken hearts but silent lips;
With all our glories in eclipse,
And some beyond recall.

We stand beside our dead—our eyes
In patient sufferance raised to Thee;
And kissed the still brows reverently—
Behold our sacrifice!

Behold our sacrifice! We give
The best blood of a suffering land!
A nation's heart by its own hand
Is stricken—that Right may live!

No failure this! God's own right hand
Of victory shall write it down!
The years shall strengthen its renown.
Be proud of it, oh Land!

Thou Christ! the Godhood of Thy brow
Paled 'neath the throes of mortal pain;

But all thy glory glows again,
Thrice-haloed, 'round Thee now!

Give us the martyr's steadfast power,
So, passing our Gethsemane,
Our glory shall but brighter be
For this, our trial hour.

SHERMAN.

We shall call on thee no more,
 Sherman!
On thy last march art thou gone,
Great Captain, yet alone,
 Sherman!

All dauntless yet forlorn
Fighting high, night to morn,
Breathless and sore and shorn,
 Sherman! Sherman!

Thou has broken thy last camp,
 Sherman!
But to a soundless drum,
Only spectres around thee come,
 Sherman!

Full battle worn and sore
Thou art facing for that shore
Where battles are no more,
 Sherman! Sherman!

The dark came and the rain,
 Sherman!
So didst thou march away
Out of the clouded day,
 Sherman!

Alas and O, alas!
That we had to let thee pass,
Toward that Sea of Glass,
 Sherman! Sherman!

They are waiting on the shore,
 Sherman!
They are stretching arms to thee—
March on and thou shalt see,
 Sherman!

Aye, the last great deed is wrought,
The last great fight is fought,
 Sherman!

The foe is put to rout,
 Sherman!
Dost hear that welcoming shout?
The last bivouac fire is out.
 Sherman! Sherman!

SIGNALINGS.

I.

When soldiers go footsore, without redress
Too long upon a rough and dreary road,
In time their heads hang low and spiritless,
Nor will they hurry for the threats that goad.
But make the shrill-mouthed trumpet your ally,
Speak courage through the thunder of deep
 drums,
They will forget to murmur by and by.
Each will o'ertop the weariness that numbs
With upheld head and bright unflinching eye.
Have wings grown suddenly upon their feet?

No! But the music tells them it is sweet
For God and glory and our land to die!

II.

Sing me some song of deeds that brush the bloom
From emulous strivings; for my sordid soul
Is like the weaver pent up at his loom,
Who works peacemeal and never sees the whole
Till toil that blindly creeps toward the sublime
Brings to the pale, pinched wretch his triumph
hour.
The woven picture, perfect as a rhyme,
Charms him as never could the living flower.
I see my work too close! 'Tis but the chime
Heard from afar that grows in mellowing sweet-
ness.
I am wholly sick of mine own incompleteness!
Sing me a step away from the earth and time!

III.

Travelers, when lost amid the snows that wind
Their white arms round the mountain, with
brows set
Toward its summit, if they chance to find
Footprints before them, speedily forget
Their late despairings and go straining on.
Thus, I am lost, not half way up the hill,
Though by some beaten track I might have gone
Dismayed, uncertain, I toil upward still,
But see no path across this vast unknown,
Its cold, white liveness chills me! Only show
One footprint in the way that I must go
And make me strong for climbing on alone!

TO FRIENDS.

TO JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

ON HIS SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY.

[December 17, 1877.]

Seventy years, my friend, hast thou
Calmly trod the kindly earth,
And their seal on breast and brow
Makes me love their ripened worth.

Dearer, dearer far to me
Thy thought-laden, silvered head;
Thou if I thy prime could see,
Bright dark locks and health's sweet red.

"Ah, at seventy all is said!"
Nay, friend! Thou hast Youth of Soul!
Thou hast garnered well the bread
Of the heart—that keeps thee whole.

Only because winter loved thee,
Hides its snow within thy hair.
Ah, but summer too hath proved thee,
Round thee clings its genial air.

Seventy years! Be glad, my friend.
Their experience sets thee free.
Lightly 'neath them dost thou bend,
Beautiful they seem to me!

Let me put my hand in thine,
Stand with thee a moment here,
Just within the light divine
Shining 'round thy seventieth year.

If the way was long and hard,
Looking back, how short it seems.
Nothing now is missed or marred,
All is better than thy dreams!

TO JOHN ELDERKIN

ON HIS WEDDING DAY.

Friend of the later and the long gone years!
Ever so firm and gentle, kind and true
In this the brightest hour your fortune bears,
Shall I not speak to you?

Ah, not because you are so happy, friend!
You need not me to give your gladness voice.
And if I speak, it is unto this end
That I myself rejoice.

And must say out my gladness and my thanks
With what content my thoughts are bent your
way.
Though I stood not as one among your ranks
Of friends upon that day.

Not in the flesh, but in the spirit, my friend,
Eager I pressed upon your onward path,
With all the faith that kindly memories lend,
All strength that friendship hath.

And not one heart of all that followed you
Pressed closer or cried blessing more than mine,

And if you thought me careless or untrue,
Old friend, know by this sign:

Not one of all the seeds of kindliness
And faithfulness, sown thickly through the years,
That at last sprang into fruitfulness
And perfect harvest bears.

Take time, between two happy heartbeats, then,
To think how wholly glad I am for you,
And know me as I come and go again,
Silent and true!

PRISCA.

[St. Prisca, says the legend, was one of the first Roman converts to Christianity. She was but thirteen when she was sentenced to be torn to pieces by a lion in the Coliseum. But when he burst into the amphitheatre, instead of attacking her, he gently licked her feet. So she was taken back to prison and beheaded for her faith.]

There are legends of the Saints martyrs
That will tell you how she died
In the dawn of virgin sweetness,
In the bud of maiden pride.
And I think that I can see her,
As that afternoon she stood
In the echoing Coliseum,
In her wonderous martyr mood.

Not a day beyond thirteen!
O, the spirit of the child!
Standing in her robes of whiteness,
Pure, serene and undefiled,
All alone before those thousands,
Waiting for his coming in,

In the hush that made betrayal
For the falling of a pin!

Other tales of saints and martyrs
Never moved me like to this.
I can see that lifted forehead
Worthy the Madonna's kiss.
I can see the rose of childhood
Flushing still her girlish cheek
While her child hand puts the fillet
From her temples, young and meek.

Who shall wonder that the dwelling
Of her eyes upon his own
Conquered even the hungry lion
By the light that in them shone;—
Drew them by their power of sweetness
To the side of that rare child?
Till the people saw him crouching
Where she stood, in radiance mild.

But the hearts of men were fiercer
Than the lion's in his need.
Though the kingly beast was vanquished,
Romans did the savage deed.
Sad the tale the legend tells us
Of how little Prisca died
With a light around her forehead
And a lily at her side.

WILHELMINE.

[She lived nobly, suffered bravely, and died fearlessly.]

I.

Ah! She had such splendid eyes!
Dusk brown eyes, akin to black,
Large and full and deeply set—
Looking forward less than back;
Eyes replete with self-possession,
Eyes so grand in self-repression;
But all hope was wept out of them,
Only longings fed their fires;
And the sad brow set above them
Spoke unsatisfied desires.

II.

Cheeks like dying damask roses
Washed and pale by sorrow's rain,
And a gracious mouth grown rigid
In its set, from years of pain.
And her faultless woman's head!
Grecian sculptors ages dead
Would have bowed them reverently
To the perfect revelation
Of the classic marble's need—
Would have knelt in adoration
Of dear Nature's darling deed!

III.

I have seen no other foot
Thoroughbred and lithe as hers:
When before Canova's graces,

Its remembrance in me stirs.
Instep, so divinely curved!
Outline, faultlessly preserved!
Ah! Thou wonder among women!
I am fretted to the heart,
Thinking how my words are few
To depict thee as thou wert—
What I will, I cannot do.

IV.

Neck, so slender and so straight,
White and stately as a lily;
And a perfect shape but illy
Fitted for her Life's hard lot.
Now it moulders, all forgot—
Burgeons into violets—
And no painter's hand hath traced it
With the cunning of his craft—
All the subtle charms that graced it
Gone like nectar, spilt or quaffed!

V.

Let this be thy compensation:
That thou livest in my love;
Whose sweet soul was to thy body
What the hand is to the glove.
I shall never see another
Like to thee my noble mother!
Mind of Man and soul of Woman—
All my heart out of me goes—
Spent in unavailing tears—
When I think upon thy woes,
Ponder over thy martyred years!

LOVE.

FAUST'S MARGARET AT THE VIRGIN'S
ALTAR.

How can I live? How can I live, dear heaven!
When all my life is torn with anguish wild?
Fair Mother! Sanctified by Sorrows Seven,
Look on me, for the sake of Christ, thy Child
Whom thou didst carry 'neath thy virgin bosom
Awhile in silence, weighed down with scorn,
After God sent His Angel with the blossom
And that sweet message, touching thy unborn.

Ah, woe is me! I dare not touch a lily!
When I would say, "For my child's sake"—O,
shame!
Such prayer befits my tarnished lips but illy,
I blush to think I bear a mother's name.
Yet, O, because my sorrow is a sorrow—
Though thine was pure and mine is born of sin—
Help me to hope that some divine tomorrow
God's grace will lift the latch and let me in.

But now, not for myself, on weak knees bended,
Dear, Dolorous Mother! do I seek thine eyes,
For all my hope of self on earth is ended—
Never can joy again in me uprise!
Still thou, that Virgin, wert yet mother-hearted,
Canst pity this poor mother-heart within
My stained bosom, nigh with pain parted,
Where harbors the sweet sinless child of sin!

Then by thy Seven Dolors I implore thee,
 Let thy uplifted glances plead for me;
 Think of the night of blackness that swept o'er
 thee

When thy child hung for sin upon the tree;
 Sinless, yet suffering for the sins of others
 As well I know my child must suffer too;
 Forget but that we both are anguished Mothers,
 And let my babe hide 'neath thy mantle blue!

Ah, take it, ere the world hath quite undone it!—
 Ah, let us die: dear heaven, let us both die!—
 Far better that the sun look not upon it.
 And O, how sweet in the green grave to lie!
 There hiding, with my baby on my bosom,
 The world's scorn, never should our rest invade;
 Even a lily o'er our grave might blossom,
 And some pure tears be dropped there by a maid!

.

Ah, God! what is it? Whence is this temptation?
 Pity my burning brain, my breaking heart!
 For my child's sake give patience for salvation—
 Or let us creep up nearer where Thou art!

EN PASSANT.

I.

Was that your face? Why I have seen it splendid
 As the Archangel's shining through my dreams!
 If that were your true, earthly self, it seems
 That all my dreaming should be sharply ended.

II.

Just glimpsed in passing! Am I wiser for it?
 How thick the ice has grown 'twixt you and me!

Yet from the first we knew it was to be.
Which is the most unconquerable spirit?

III.

Your own, or mine? Yet, I imagine somewhat
I am the victor. There was such a look
Upon you; as if something in you shook.
Nay! I care not for this late triumph. Come
what will.

IV.

Still may of wear and change to dim its brightness,
One moment's passing glance into your face
So dear to me is, God be thanked, His grace
I love your darkness as I loved your lightness.

V.

And if no more to pass ye Christ me giveth,
Take my forgiveness, would be scornful eyes!
I know the wistful heart that 'neath ye lies;
I know the hunger that in two breasts liveth!
New York, November 14, 1874.

 EXORCISM.

Ah, poor, pale face! Why will you come between
me
And the bitter and heavy purpose of my heart?
Face, like the face of him who hath forgotten me,
You vex my soul, and I summon you to depart.

Let me alone, pale face, we are divided.
There's an end of the loving betwixt him and me.
My heart can never excuse away his falseness—
I never will smile upon you—let me be!

You are not his face; albeit, you are so like him,
As he used to be, in the sweet time, long ago.
The same sad eyes, so large, and so full of loving;
And the mouth that kissed, and clung, and would
not go!

The same pale face! Always to mine uplifted,
Till I, pitying, took its wanness betwixt my hands;
And out of my fingers made for it a framing
Of tenderest white and ruddily-tinted bands.

I wonder, now, that you linger here to vex me.
'Twere a little thing that you should let me rest;
Since I know, pale face, that I am forgotten—forgotten!
And I am ashamed to say that it is not best.

Ah, poor, pale face! I know you now, for the mirage
Of my heavy misery, pluralling itself.
Sometimes the page, black-lettered, comes before us,
Though the book be closed and lying on the shelf.

His face—not as it is, but as I'd have it—
If I could look through the sibyl's magic glass;
Into the quiet street in that grey old city,
And the door should open and I should see him
pass!

LOST.

Fade, O! Day, so chill and dreary,
Hide thee in the arms of night,
And these scenes of wasted beauty,
Shut them from my aching sight—
Falls the rain in dirge-like cadence,
Chants the wind a funeral rhyme,

And such bitter, bitter memories
Haunt this dreary autumn time—

And I cannot any longer
Still my spirit's pleading cry,
And the tortured soul within me
Must have utterance or die.
Ah! this awful gulf of silence
Stretching between your life and mine,
Never ray of cheering sunlight
O'er its awful depths may shine.

And I stretched my arms in pleading,
So unutterable and deep—
God! If I could only cross it,
On your neck to fall and weep!
Ah! If I can but feel the darkness,
Can but see the clouds that lie
Lead like, shutting out the sunshine
From my future voiceless sky.

Ah! I cannot any longer
Crush the passionate thoughts that rise,
I have struggled long and bravely,
I have worn a proud disguise,
But my heart is worn and bleeding
And its life-drops ebb away.
I am faint, forgive my weakness,
I have suffered so today!

Can but stand and send my moaning,
Vainly to the farther shore,
Feeling that I may not reach you,
Feeling you art mine no more!
Hadst you died, I had not murmured
For my treasure gone before,
I had kissed your eyes and whispered
And the hoarded lore of yore.

But—to find it sternly trampled
 'Neath your unheeding feet,
 Then flung back upon the giver
 With a cruel scorn unmeet!
 Yet, O lost one, I forgive you
 Those last cruel, crushing words—
 I could kiss the hand that rudely
 Tore my spirit's bleeding chords.

I forgive you all my suffering,
 All these weary nights of woe,
 And the blight flung o'er my future,
 All because I love you so!
 When they leave me cold and silent,
 When the passionate pain is past,
 You will know I never wronged you—
 Know me faithful to the last.

But I never wronged you, dearest,
 Never was in thought untrue;
 All my highest, holiest heart-throbs
 And the inmost—were for you.
 When they leave me cold and silent,
 When the passionate pain is past,
 You will know I never wronged you—
 Know me faithful to the last!

After the final separation—her Journal. She gives it to him
 upon her dying bed.

What! wilt thou have this wornout hand,
 So late to lie in thine?
 What! Shines the sun so bright today,
 Thoust blinded by its shine?

Or rather hast thou gone in soul
 Back to that long ago

When this poor hand was soft as silk
And nigh as fair as snow?

Ah! then 'twas meet to prop the brow
Where shadows never stayed.
'Twas meet to lift and bind away
The brown hair of a maid!

'Twas meet to shade bright eyes that looked
Always toward the sun.
But, ah, that girl of long ago
And I—we are not one!

But I, though I am sad and worn
And fallen from my best,
Will not pretend my sun is high
When it is in the West.

I scorn to hold a light old coin
At its first worth to buy
The fair new trappings of today.
You're just and so am I!

You say that if my looks are old,
Why then so is your love—
How soon you locked it in the drawer
With this old-fashioned glove!

Not either of the ancient twain
Is fit to see the light.
No more than is my shrinking face,
And so, sweet heart, good night.

No! No! I am too proud to let
Your kisses lie thereon,
To let you love me for the sake
Of what is past and gone.

I am not what I might have been,
And this indeed is why

I sob upon your breast, sweetheart,
Good night and aye, good bye!

I, sitting silent by the sea,
Had one sweet thought, my own sweetheart, of thee
That in the twilight came and gladdened me
Like a tender hand.

Since all my life has been one vain demand,
One fruitless striving toward the far-off land
Of Love assured, beyond this shifting sand
Of dreary doubt:

Seeing how Love hath cast complaisance out,
Seeing how Love hath grown my life about,
Lifting my soul, as honor lifts the lout,
Nearer the stars.

When that my heart shall have beat through its bars
And healed of all its deep and ancient scars,
Lies down aweary of its well won wars,
To slumbers bliss.

If some sweet woman should draw near, nor miss
The name that tells her dust of mine was this
Saying, with sigh as tender as a kiss,
In whisper low:

"Was she not fair since he sang of her so?
Ah, fair and sweet and good she was, I know,
Seeing his life unaccompanied could go
For the sake of her."

And then I think that it will thrill and stir
Even in the dust, thy low mute worshipper,

The indivisible heart I gave thee here
Steadfast as doom.

And maybe if a white rose be in bloom—
Sweetening the place of graves with its perfume,
Like a fair nun within a convent room—
If in my dust

The fibres of its wandering roots be thrust
A pale pink light may glow about it just
As in the hearing of you my cheek must
Betray heart's trust.

O, Love! Love! Love! Thou that art set to flee,
Let the wind follow thy flying feet
That I may not see
In the white shore sand thy footprints shapen

Turning away from me,
For my hands are hot, strong to hold thee,
My arms are too weak to fold thee,
So pass away
As the sun goes under the falling curtain
Of finished day!

THE SWEET OLD FASHION OF LOVING.

O 'tis sad, sad work to love and to lose,
And so much of it makes us weary,
As we stumble ahead on the road of life,
Where the shadows are dark and dreary.
But I'd rather die of loving too well,
And that fatal love, if proving
Then that ever my heart should forget to
follow

The sweet old fashion of loving!
The sweet old fashion of loving!

O take, if you will, the red from my cheek,
And take the pulse from my hand,
And darken my eyes to the springtime light
And the blossoming of the land;
Take all the rest that is sweetest and best,
And mightiest at heart moving,
But let me take to the far country
The sweet old fashion of loving!
The sweet old fashion of loving!

Ah, yes! I might give up every one
Of the roses of June so sweet!
And the dark blue violets that lie
So lovingly at my feet!
And everything in this great sweet world,
And count it but love's bequest.
But never! in life or death,
The sweet old fashion of loving!
The sweet old fashion of loving!

And though it may bring tears to my eyes,
And bring the pain to my heart,
With the lonely yearning for what is not,
That makes love's bitterest part,
As the nightingale hides the thorn in her
breast,
Though the pain is all proving,
I will not cure mine, if with it must go
The sweet old fashion of loving!
The sweet old fashion of loving!

THREE FLOWERS IN ONE.

She shows a cheek as delicately pale
As any frail, untimely, foundling flower
On the Spring's threshold dropt, when storms prevail;
The improvident gift of an imprudent hour.
But would you see
This white anemone
Straightway become the daintiest of blush roses?
Wait till she sits communing silently
With her clear thoughts—less shy when she supposes
That no eyes trace
Her fancies in her face,
And then, unseen, behind her, bend your lips
To that fine ear, and whisper—just a name.
First ravishing pink doth this smooth snow eclipse,
Pure as the heart from whence its nurture came;
Then, wonder upon wonder, our blush rose
Slowly into the deepest damask grows.
Rare trinity of snow and flesh and flame,
Born of a maiden's innocent sweet shame!

To not believe in Love—Ah, me!
When once I did believe,
Nothing could hurt my loyal heart,
Nor make me long to grieve.
And, like a bird upon the bough
In Eden's virgin grove,
The lilt of every song I sang
Was Love, was Love, was Love!

I never doubted once that he
 Would come to me a king,
And wrap me in his royal robe,
 And seal me with his ring;
And every breeze that stirred my hair,
 And every wayside flower
Set all my life athrill with hope
 Of that expected hour!

Alas, if I had only lived
 In dreams with my ideal,
Nor sought to give the fiction life
 To wail and find it real,
Then never had my hot hands struck
 The false god to my feet,
Finding the lie that men call Love
 Was bitter, and not sweet!

'Twas like as if a brutal hand
 Smote hard upon my mouth,
That was as full of song as winds
 That wander from the South;
And I forgot the sweetest trick
 My lips had ever known;
My songs had been my company,
 And now I was alone.

Alone, and never more to watch,
 As I had watched before,
Working and waiting, listening for
 Love's footsteps at the door.
Thenceforth my life could never find
 Its olden, healthy groove,
Because upon me fell this doom—
 To not believe in Love!

For Faith and Hope had fallen from me;
 No more the world was bright.

There was no meaning in my heart
 When any named Delight.
 I see them play at Love whose play
 Is worth a worn-out glove—
 Is it fate who dare the proof
 To not believe in Love?

O the hearts that have burst and the hearts that
 have ached and have broken!
 And the strong that have drifted to wreck,
 Trying to speak in the tongue not here to be spoken
 And to brush from their eyes the speck.

The dazzling mote that swam between their seeing,
 And the things desired to be seen,
 All their lives long they picked at the problem,
 And at last—well, their graves are green!

And whether to lie under foot, like the worm up-
 turning,
 Kiss the dust, and make no more sign,
 Or whether to loosen the thoughts in the soul in-
 burning,
 And touch the train that kindles the mine.

Or whether to say, All things go on without me;
 I may dance, and may drink, and may feast;
 I cannot escape from the web that has grown about
 me,
 For the sun must still rise in the East.

You, through the might of all men that ever existed
 And of all that shall ever exist,
 Were into one drop of being compressed and con-
 gested
 To rise, revolt, and resist!

I will not speak in fulsome phrase
Of glowing cheeks and waving tresses;
I leave them for the insincere;
My heart a higher aim possesses.
I leave the flatterer's flowery page
To those who nothing deeper know,
And in my simple, homely way
I tell you that I love you so!

Your sunny smile, your warm caress,
Are dearer than angelic graces;
I love to hear your gentle step
Among the pleasant household places.
I turn away from brighter eyes,
From sweeter voices' polished flow,
Impatient for your kindly face,
Because I love you so!

And so, though others be forgot,
Your memory will ever linger,
Untarnished by the mold of years,
Unblotted by time's ruthless finger.
I leave this pledge, before my feet
From dear Argyle are forced to go—
But don't forget when I am gone—
I love you, oh, I love you so!

REHEARSAL.

It must come to this some day,
Friend, for me as well as you;
I must learn to put away,
Learn this bitter thing to do.

Let me now to you be true,
As you sure would be to me;
These unseeing eyes of blue,
Look not in them, and let be

These unanswering hands and lips.
I will do all decently;
Fold these icy finger-tips,
Put these dead eyes in eclipse.

Though it stab my heart with pain,
Keener thou the frost that nips,
I must do all this again—
Nay, I see myself so plain

In the time that is to come,
Beaten down like shattered grain,
In my own invaded home,
Or, like seaweed on the foam,

Drifting, worthless, here and there;
Torn up, evermore to roam
Homeless, 'twixt the earth and air—
Minding me how life was fair,

When the breath was in one month,
Sweet and safe, serene and rare,

As a flower bank in the South!
Then—the bleak, black, bitter drouth!

If I live this thing must be—
Or some one must bear for me
All this bitter misery
That creeps on us unaware!

GRIEVE NOT THE HEART THAT LOVES THEE.

Grieve not the heart that loves thee;
Not oft is true love found;
Then hold it not so light to pierce
One heart with deathful wound;
A fragile vase, a costly cup,
In sooth, it is light to break;
But tell me—can a skillful hand
The shattered thing remake?

Grieve not the heart that loves thee;
Be sure thou wilt repent;
The poisoned shaft of pain rebounds
On him by whom 'twas sent;
There's not a single unkind word,
One dark, unloving look,
But conscience faithfully records
In memory's varied book.

Grieve not the heart that loves thee;
When separation's past;
When the dear one is gone from thee,
And tears come thick and fast;
Then, then, the ghosts of those harsh acts
Will rise in strict array;
With bitter, unavailing truth,
Sad love will mourn and pray.

Grieve not the heart that loves thee;
For, trust me, they who feel,
Know how the sneer-sent shaft of scorn
Can match the glittering steel;
And none, none but the wounded one
May tell how deep and sharp
The pain that tears one rough-struct string
Upon the spirit's harp.

Grieve not the heart that loves thee,
The heart that loves thee so;
'Twould lose its own best blood before
Thy dearer life should flow!
Anger, I think, is quick to flash,
Yet pause and think awhile,
Then shalt thou speak in gentler tone,
If not with loving smile.

Grieve not the heart that loves thee,
Grieve not the gentle one;
The trusting spirit ill can brook
One harsh, unloving tone!
Grieve not the heart that loves thee,
Cloud not its tranquil sky.
O never meet the glance of love
With cold, unfeeling eye.

THE SHEAF OF THE YEARS.

The years! The wonderful years!
Baby dimples and April tears!
The apple blossoms' divine perfume,
The red rosebud and the violet bloom.
Are these the best and brightest of all?
Because you dream of your father's call,
Of your sister's song, and your brother's face,
And your mother's tender, unselfish grace.

O the years! The passionate years!
The love of youth, and its hopes and fears,
Its storm and stress, and its hungry heart,
The pain of souls that but meet to part,
Feet that search for the thorniest way,
And follow it bleeding till brought to bay;
High hearts, brave spirits, and blades untried,
And the sudden falls that await young pride!

O! next the ripening years of our fuller life,
The clasp of his hands, the clinging wife,
The nested nook, with its sheltering abode;
Its shielded nestlings, its watchful love;
These alternate with the strain of strife,
And the din of the high, hot noon of life,
The hungry heart and the burning word;
For these are the years of the unsheathed sword.

Alas, for the years that seem all cold,
When the head grows grey and the face grows old;
When the leaves fall fast from Life's withering tree,
And never a ship comes home from sea.
The years that grow dim with a tear, with mist,
Till we search in vain for the lips that we kissed;
Till the chill fog swallows the faces dear
That made our summer for many a year.

Last come the years of a pensive peace,
The looking westward for God's release;
Gather them all into one close sheaf,
The years of joy, and the years of grief;
The years that bless and the years that burn,
Winter's rigor and summer's charm;
And write on the bound-up sheaf, "God's will!"
Love, labor, and suffer, and then be still!

THE PIONEER WOMEN OF CALIFORNIA.

Working, working, working,
 Along through weary weeks,
Brows a network of wrinkles,
 Worn and pallid cheeks;
Clothes for the men and children,
 And themselves, to last a year,
And gathering up their belongings
 With goodbys far and near.

Then, bundling into the wagons,
 In spring to cross the plains—
How many tragical legends
 Cling round those o'erladen wains!
Of all those devoted women
 Do you wonder so many are dead?
Rather that any are living,
 Should we marvel instead.

For they worked to get ready to start,
 And they worked on the way across,
Nor laid down their household burdens,
 In time of trial and loss.
For the work of a working woman
 Is never, never done,
Till her hands lie still forever,
 And her final rest is won.

If you want to know how they struggled
 As they dropped along Life's way,
Ask of a few of those women
 Who were spared to live till today.
Never a saint nor a martyr
 So richly deserved a crown,

And cursed be the son of a mother
Who drags their memory down.

Men of the Golden West!
Women more brave and pure,
For husbands and home and children
More steadfast to endure,
Than your own undaunted woman
Never have breathed life's breath,
And he that would defame them
Merits a shameful death.

Stand up! Stand up in your manhood
To repel the cowardly slur
Fiercely, all and each of you,
For the memory of "Her,"
Since every slighting word
Straight to each man's heart goes,
Since most of their lips are silent,
Never more to unclose.

Do more for these steel-true comrades,
So fragile, and yet so brave,
Each silently worked and suffered,
Till she fell by her waiting grave.
Alas! how few of the many
Still live to tell the tale!
Do them all a little justice,
Ere all have sought Death's vale!

Build them up a monument—
You can but give them a stone—
But let them lie no longer,
Forgotten; condemned, alone.
Build up your grandest monument
To them, alive and dead,
And give the lie to the coward's word,
Nor leave the Truth unsaid!

THE LESSON OF OUR LOSS.

ON THE DEATH OF HENRY GEORGE.

["I will sit here awhile."—Last words of Henry George.]

He has gone from us at last,
 True and Faithful Knight!
 Spotless from the lists he passed,
 Death-hurt in the fight.

Painfully we strained to see,
 Helpless, standing by,
 That grim contest, silently
 Waged, till night drew nigh.

Till he could not see to fight,
 Had not strength to stand;
 Slowly sank, the while the light
 Faded from the land.

Sank so gradually to earth
 That we scarcely knew
 When his latest breath went forth
 From his lips so true.

Hardly knew we that his sword
 Faltered in his grasp;
 Too worn, he, for his parting word,
 Or for kindly clasp.

We, with faces bent above
 That still face below—
 Sight of which in us could move
 Unknown depths of woe:

Felt how he had taken all
In his single hand;
Sealed to strife beyond recall
For his kind and land!

Never sending backward glance
From the bitter field,
Never murmuring in durance,
With no mind to yield.

Giving all that in him was,
Manhood's ripest strength;
Fighting—failing? winning thus!
Lying still at length.

What is this the dead mouth saith
To each broken breast?
Louder than with force of breath:
"Brothers, it is best!"

He, from heights serene, achieved,
Pangless, looking down,
From the day's sore stress relieved,
Clothed in fresh renown;

Sees, in solemn, speechless joy,
How Columbia's tears
Falling for her sore annoy
O'er his blighted years;

Out of his untimely grave
Cause a tree to start;
Hers to tend, to hold and have,
Precious to her heart!

In its leaves shall healing ride
For her growing ills;
'Neath its shade she shall abide
In the Peace that fills.

For, as it shall wax in growth,
 Shall her eyes see clear;
To forget she shall be loath
 How 'twas planted there.

For the stubborn ears unclose
 When Death's silence speaks;
Truths, long trifled with, God knows,
 Bringing tear-stained cheeks.

Santa Cruz, Cal., December 22, 1897.

NATURE.

APRIL SUNSHINE.

You know
What strange sweet thoughts, and memories, and
 hopes,
The first warm days of the young Spring bring
 with them—
How olden fancies, crushed and prisoned long,
In some dark corner of the busy heart,
Spring forth, with a strange wayward power,
To life and light and April's sun again!

And how we long
To be away from busy life and care,
And pent-up yearnings haunt the sated soul—
A passionate longing for the dim old woods,
Where emerald mosses and blue violets grow!

We would be out
In the warm sunshine, where the meadow grass
Shows its young green, and delicate anemones
Bare their pure foreheads to the April wind!

And how we watch
The bursting of the leaves and brighter flowers,
And love to loiter in the garden walks,
Planning and planting in the fresh-turned earth—
Children again! Oh, Spring hath witchery in it!

IN WINTER.

Look, how the bald, blur line of distant mountains,
Shrinking away from the descending heaven,
Dark, dappled like to crouching leopards even,
In whose cold breasts lie warmth-awaiting foun-
tains,
Seem to draw nearer, with tentative feet,
Bedabbled by the lake's tempestuous billows,
Yearning across it these far fields to meet,
As tired heads yearn for white and lonely pillows.

And see the lakeward-sloping fields, us facing,
That have the skirting wood for sentinel.
They, too, shrink from those skies, so joy displac-
ing,
That scowl alike on wood and field and fell:
They seem forever downward gliding, creeping
Away from Evil that might overtake;
Though wrapped in neutral white, they wage un-
sleeping
A common fight for life, like hill and lake.

What is the signal from the beckoning hills,
Leaning across the rough breast of the lake?
What is the fear that through its waters thrills?
What panic is't keeps the earth awake,
As it goes groping blindly toward the sun,
While wrestling with the cold that chills its veins,
Fighting the death in those low skies so dun,
That numbs the white cheeks of its shrinking
plains?

Heart, whose regards are set straight toward the
storm,

Round whom the cold of hopelessness is closing,
That passeth the hamlet windows gleaming warm,
And climbest toward the heights in white repos-
ing:

Know it is death to sleep upon the way!

Go staggering on, as toward the sun the earth.
If thy last breath can buy that upper day,
Thou shalt win all Life holds, of long worth!

IN THE SWEET MAY TIME.

I was very lorn and loveless;
I was hopless, nigh, and tried,
In my weakness, with sore burdens,
And no health at my side.
And the heart you lay beneath, dear,
No more could croon a rhyme,
While I waited for your coming
In the sweet May time.

For I shivered as I waited;
I feared to see your face
Tell over all the sorrows
That in my own I trace.
What if my grief had blighted
The brightness of your glee?
What if your soulless body
Was all that I should see?

So, for me there was no gladness
In the tender green of spring,
And I hid my face in sadness
From every living thing.
Then, like a smile from heaven,
Came with the May flowers,
Your dimpled baby beauty,
In the sweet May hours!

All the blackness of my sorrow
Was gone—forever gone!
You were the fairest, lovingest,
That ere the sun shone on!
And all my hungry-heartedness
Was fed unto the full;
There were more flowers in my path
Than ever I could pull.

Yes, darling, all the sympathy
I'd missed my whole life long;
Yes, darling, all the tenderness
I'd grieved for in my song,
Came in with you and staid with you,
And, flowering with your prime—
God gave them all to me with you
In the sweet May time!

A STUDY.

A low red farmhouse, half way down a slope,
Gay with pink clover set in riotous grass,
Here, on her knees a half-twined daisy rope,
A shy child glances up to see you pass.

Beyond the nook where she sits, nested low,
A meadow, daisy-sprinkled, stretches far.
Across it what sweet wind-waves come and go!
Beyond it what black depths of woodland are.

Fringed, on this nearest side, by alder boughs,
Whose sweet white blossoming tosses like sea
foam,
Here hath my Lady Wren her dainty house—
Fairer than lace-hung palace her small home!

The place is full of secrets. Hist! the voice
Of whispering waters, stealing, green and cool,
'Twixt curtaining trees. There is no other noise,
Save a faint chirping from yonder woodland pool.

“ 'TIS AN ILL WIND,” ETC.

O, the leaves are fluttering down;
Some are scarlet, some are brown;
Some are yellow, like the crown
On the little upheld head
Of my dainty darling girl
Who won't brook a tangled curl.
Ah, how closely she doth furl
Those silk banners well bestead!
Fast to bind is fast to find;
She the yellow strands doth wind
In a shining crown behind
While she sighs for summer dead!

Faster, faster fall the leaves
Like the tears of one who grieves.
Carried are the summer's sheaves.
Ah, the wind's a robber bold!
When he stretches his strong hands
Out into the hivering lands.
Absolute are his demands
And he gets the woodland gold.
Autumn frightened from her play
Finds him swift to soil and slay.
In a night and in a day
He hath made her grey and old!

At her heart he striketh straight.
Ah, how bitter is his hate!

Not a little will he wait,
And she withers in his clasp!
All is ready for the snow.
Now, thou Goth, thou vandal, go!
From her dead neck take your grasp,
All the saddest things are yours—
Blossoms stricken to their cores,
Blighted fields and leafless shores,
All despondencies that rasp.

Only one thing have you done
That from me a smile has won—
I can see it in the sun,
The dear house that holds my love!
You have swept away the screen
Made of Summer's leafage green.
Even her window can be seen.
I could see her drop her glove,
Though November's wind is rude.
'Tis an ill wind blows no good.
I the truth in thankful mood
Of the quaint old adage prove.

WINDS OF NOVEMBER.

Blow, winds of late November, blow!
Blow every loose leaf from the tree.
Leave not a hindrance, high or low,
Betwixt the utter sky and me.

But blow thy best and let me see
The truth of Nature fully grown,
Bare of the green time's fantasy
When luckless lovers walked alone,

And only made a tender moan
Where 'neath its leaves the violet hides

Her face against the friendly stone
With many timid things besides.

But take whatever thing divides
Me from the finiteness of truth,
The cleaning spirit that confides,
But not the wishfulness of youth.

Blow from me every petty care,
Even as thou blowest the leaves away,
Bringing a loneliness severe
With every serious sunny day.

Let's see if skies be blue or grey;
Let's see if I am strong to dare
To have my summer swept away,
Nor perish in thy crucial air.

A VOLCANIC ROSE HEDGE.

VOLCANO HOUSE, CRATER OF KILAUEA.

[The following poem was found by me in a pocket of one of my mother's scrap albums. It was in the rough and was very hard for me to decipher. If it is not true to the rhythm, I beg the reader to blame it on myself and not the writer. The poem was written one evening late after we had arrived at the Volcano House, on the Island of Hawaii, in 1890. We had ridden a long way from Hilo on horseback, or rather muleback. The guide had forgotten water. We had been delayed, and it was just dusk when we reached the Volcano House. Just before our journey's end we suddenly came across a most wonderful hedge of red and white roses. Their beauty and fragrance in such a spot fairly overwhelmed us. The poem brings it back very vividly to me, although I was a small child at the time.—E. S. McG.]

Behind a dead volcano, slowly shrinking,
The sun had left the lava wash in shade,
And roofed with ferns, their giant fronds linking,
The upward way was like a world new made.

Yet all was strange: no leaf, nor fruit, nor flower,
No sight, nor sound like those of far-off home.
Dark, sullen, red gleamed Pele's awful bosom,
A far weird menace frozen with fiery foam.

Across the once red vale of desolation,
Dead ruins grey, of a long burnt-out wrath,
Over the relic's fierce annihilation,
For long hot hours had lain our ragged path.

The hot silence as of a world in embers,
A terrible thirst, and never a drop to drink—
The pain of the rack in all of our punished members,
We, drooping, dreamed of some cool river's brink.

So fared we past the fear of fruitless wandering,
Midst darkening wastes, but lately over past,
Precious the light as gold of miser's squandering,
We knew we were at the end of it at last!

As up the slope, in face of fiery sun's slow sinking,
Rode we, white strangers from far beyond the
foam,
Tousled and tired and thirsty and all unthinking,
Till in our faces blew a breath of home!

The smell of roses that run and clamber
Out of the dew of one dear cottage porch
To look at the sun as he comes from his eastern
chamber
Sleepily, kindly, his slowly reddening torch;

As out of the corner we rode to the grey clearing,
Hundreds of roses reach up to smile in our faces
On the brink of the Pit of the Burning, sweet, glad
and unfearing,
Like a smile from Heaven attend Hell's terrible
places!

O, tender and sweet and kind as a hand of healing,
To come upon them lining the long, grassy lane
Like a mirage of home to the eyes of the exile
dying,
Sweet roses from dear homes over the seas.
Like inland echoes to far-off music replying,
So sweet to my heart, dear roses, the thought of
thee.

THE REVOLT OF THE WATERS.

O, the smoothly shining water! O, the softly sleep-
ing water!
Only yesterday, my eyes
Saw the flash of oars upon it,
In their measured fall and rise.
Far away the steamy sparkle rose and fell upon
the river,
And I watched it upward quiver
With a rapturous, slight shiver,
Part delight and part surprise—
With a half smile, slowly lightening
In my pleased eyes,
As a child might watch a diamond
Held to still its cries—
Beautiful I named the river
And the upward flashing quiver
And the rhythmic glittering fall
Of the far oars upon its water,
And I leaned as to a call.

O, the treacherous, still water! O, the terrible,
strong water!
Deadlier than a host in armor
In its reddest hour of slaughter!
Wouldst that we had seen the sun

Darken ere its course was run,
Or the night been full of thunder,
Wakening us everyone—
Just some omen darkly telling
Of the ruin we should shun.
But the fair, deceitful water, but the treacherous
still water
Crept and crept and grew and gathered
Till its top with froth was lathered,
Then, with its sole strength for lever,
Made unto itself a door—
And leapt through with hungry roar.

O, the terrible, strong water! Traitorous tool of
rack and slaughter,
Once the patientest of slaves.
Mastering its recent masters,
Now its fierce uplifted waves
Work us nothing but disasters.
Ah, the ruin! Ah, the wreck!
Growing out of one small speck
Of unattended weakness. Oh!
For the wailing high and low,
For the bursting of the waters,
And the hearts and homes undone,
And the pain sown twixt the rising
And the setting of the sun!

Mill River, May 16, 1874.

A SOUND OF THE NIGHT.

Is it the wind complaining
Down in the leafless dell,
Where it sang in the summer,
Merrily, "All is Well"?

Is it the wind that shivers
Under the shivering trees—
The wind that all the summer
Was only a careless breeze?

No, the wind is the bearer
Of a sorer cry than its own—
There never came out of Nature
So utterly sad a tone.

For none but a human being,
Face downward upon the sod,
Despairing of human succour,
Could cry like that to God!

TO A SOUTHWEST WIND IN FEBRUARY.

Where are the violets? Where do they hide?
Surely, thou bringest me news of them, sweet
wind!

Thou comest from the places where they bide
And hast not left all traces of them behind.

Where are they? Very near they sure must be;
I seem to see the sweet things starting up
Around the mossed roots of some old tree;
A drop of dew in each cerulean cup.

Ah, happy breeze! For thou hast brought the
spring;—

I will go with thee, wind, to seek them out.
Was that the shadow of a fleeting wing?
With what strange glamor am I hedged about?

Alas, sweet vagrant! hast thou left me here,
The credulous plaything of thy wandering will?

Bound hand and foot in Winter's icy sphere,
Made by the cheat more miserable still!

SIMPATICA.

Wild flowers are dying in the dusk of the woods;
Tired hearts are breaking in the chambers of the
city.
Both hide well their pallor and their moods
From the cold looks that might soften to pity.

Both in the thought of Him who moulded them
both,
They are more worth than these fortunate others,
Who, with upheld heads, stand erect, nothing loth
To borrow fair fortune from the fall of their
brothers.

Pale flowers, be glad ye are hidden in the wood,
Till the shadows come and the bright sun sets.
Poor hearts, cover yourselves with solitude;
Dearest you, of all, to him who never forgets!
Santa Cruz, Cal.

A WHITE ROSE BUD HALF BLOWN.

[Dedicated to Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Blake.]

"And O!" we said, "what happiness is ours,
Since this unfolding bloom is all our own,
Our hearts from out a million more of flowers
Had chosen but this, alone.

"If God had left the choosing unto us!"—
But, all unasked, He gave it to our hands;
So, what can we do now, afflicted thus,
But bow to His commands?

He must have known who gave it in His own time,
When it was best to take it back again.
Was't that He feared for it the frost's cold rime,
Or some despoiling stain?

She blooms within his garden, our white rose,
That never was to open fully here;
To us she shall her sweetest charms disclose,
In the land without a tear.

FOUR MAPLES.

[There were four maples in front of our home in Sherwood,
New York. I think my Mother planted them. They are
immense trees now.—E. S. McG.]

Still gloriously clothed in summer's green,
My maples stately stand,
A living arch, with sunlight glints between,
They dominate the land.

And yet, since yesterday, what change has come
Upon their leafy grace—
Mysterious, inscrutable and numb,
As on a living face:

As when from out the opened door we pass
From wrestling with loss,
Yet on our foreheads bear so plain, alas!
The impress of our cross.

Last night their great destroyer passing breathed
On these a warning breath;
With martyr's chaplets they will soon be wreathed,
The harbingers of death!

And yet how slight, the fatal sigh, I think,
That presages so much!

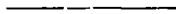
Only their leaves, a little curling, shrink
As from a shriveling touch.

Only the withering cheek, the dropping lips
Tell less of inward wound;
Not suddenly comes summer's full eclipse
When dead leaves strew the ground.

And yet my maples shall forget their blight,
And bud anew next spring—
Canst thou not break thy way through sorrow's
night
And hear the bluebirds sing?

O heart! that art a target set for all
The darts of evil fate!
Remember how she overcomes the small,
And cringes to the great.

Regard my maples, doomed, as to the knife,
But mind thee, still I pray,
How they shall pass through icy death to life;
And why not thou, as they?



APPLE BLOSSOMS IN DECEMBER:

Shy maiden—modest, pink and white
Young blossoms, veiled in vestal dew!
As pure as youth's first dream delights,
True daughter of a sire that grew.

'Neath peaceful and magnificent skies,
With no betrayal in their blue;
Watched by the sun-god's steadfast eyes,
Till all perfected through and through.

And so in this December hour
That elsewhere falls on troublous time,
In this Hesperian orchard bower,
Fit witness of an ideal clime.

Vague hints of buried love and spring
Thrill through the budding boughs around;
For lo! the blue flash of a wing!
And list, what May time notes abound!

'Mid rustling leaves and bluebirds' call,
And scented snow on plum tree boughs,
Dream-fauns and Dryads faint footfalls,
That mingle in moonlit carouse;

So ghostly light, they leave no traces
Upon the vine-leaf carpet red—
Only the stars behold their faces,
And know them for fair fables dead!

And so, by simulant sights and sounds
The grand trees' royal sap is stirred;
With earthly Paradise around,
With love and leaf and bloom and bird.

A faint wind brings that breath divine,
Intoxicant of early spring—
O Maytime hopes! Lost youth of mine!
That Age should chance on such a thing.

With mid-life's troubled dream behind,
At last to meet with such a hap;
Close sheltered from each chilling wind,
(Spring is smiling thus, in winter's lap).

Ah! tears wrung out of hopeless eyes
That plead and watched and wept in vain;
Mar not beneath these gracious skies,
With any savor of your pain.

This fragrant omen of release,
God-granted, from too hard a fate;
The apple blossoms' breath of peace,
The glamor of the Golden Gate!

THE WINE CUP OF THE HILLS.

The rim of the hill is close laid
To the breast of the sky—
What Titianess, proud, unafraid,
Lifts this chalice on high?

Holds it up to the kiss of the sun,
The caress of the wind,
With its richness of grapes well begun,
'Neath the slow blushing rind?

O never a wine cup like this
Saw satyr or god!
O never such largeness of bliss
Met award from Jove's nod!

And O to be here and alone
With the vines and the sky—
With the wine stirring warm 'neath the zone
Where the nectar doth lie!

See the slopes! and the slopes! and the slopes!
North, South, East and West!
See the vines climbing up like the hopes
That no song hath expresst!

See the vines clamber high on the hills,
Turning gold as they go!
And, beneath them, with prescient thrills,
But all royally slow;

The matchless, divine clusters grand
Of the ripening grapes,
Making glorious all the hill land
With their ravishing shapes!

The breath of the hills and the sky
And the smell of the vine,
And the freshness of life that is nigh
In the sun's ripening shrine:

Is anything better than these
On all the round earth?
Here nothing is drear, or amiss,
And all is so worth!

OF EL DORADO.

ADMISSION DAY.

[California, September 9, 1850.]

Native Sons of the Golden West!
Daughters dear, of the loveliest land
That ever the sunlight hath caressed,
Fresh and fair from the Maker's hand!
The day that today ye celebrate
Is the day of days in YOUR calendar;
So young are the years of your golden State
That her children's spirits are still astir,

Their hearts still thrilled and their blood aflame
With the thought of all that the news implied,
Upon that day when the tidings came
And their loved land stood up, flushed with
pride,
In the ranks of her sister States, a State;
Brave blood, strong heart, and a will to do!

They kept her not at the entrance gate,
For she brought as her dower a thing or two
That her elegant sisters could not despise
(THEIR descents were long, but HER clothes
were new);
She was splendid and rare, if not old and wise—
She, of whom you're proud—the Mother of you!

They pictured her in the days of old
As a couchant panthress—an untamed thing,

As a savage princess decked with gold,
With barbaric glitter of chain and ring.
Deep in her eyes were the dreams of Spain,
And her savage blood had a tinge of blue;
Oft was she sought and wooed in vain—
She, of whom you're proud—the Mother of you!

Of her early days, what memories throng,
When they would have made her a dusky nun!
But the floating fragments of foreign song
Were lost in silence ere well begun.
And all of the time she hid in her heart
Its golden secret for you destined;
You, the fruits of her Statehood, were set apart,
To have what the others could not find!

Ye may well be proud of her—call her fair—
Love her sun-kiss'd cheeks and her lovesome lips;
Play with her splendid lengths of hair—
Kiss her eyes, whose glory all gems eclipse!
To each native daughter and native son,
Scions of such a wonderful tree,
I say that since ever the world begun
No land has been worthy of love, as she.

"As true as gold" and "as good as gold,"
Was a saying, when she was hid from sight;—
So they said in the days of old,
When she came to them in the dreams of night;
And as good she is, as her own pure gold;
And as fair and precious, and firm and true,
With the most of her story yet untold—
This is she that you love—the Mother of you!

She will bring you love, she will bring you wealth,
She will bring you gladness and length of days,
And, better than gold, she will bring you health,
She whom her children are proud to praise!
Oh, right you are to call her the gem
In the bright confederacy of States!

But see that you shine in her diadem,
For the will of the world upon you waits;
And the eye of the world is on you, sharp,
And the thought of the world, it questioneth you;
And since you are born to a golden harp,
See that the music you make is true!

THE UNVEILING OF THE FOUNTAIN.

[Presented to San Francisco by Mayor James D. Phelan, and dedicated to the Native Sons of the Golden West, September, 1897. It was through the great fire and earthquake of 1906.]

This delicate shaft, so slender, yet so strong,
How proudly it upbears
Its splendid burden, perfect as a song,
The which, it crownlike wears!

Meet art thou, O fair figure, to uphold,
With arms untired and young,
Th' unwritten book, like to a cup unfilled,
Like to a song unsung!

But that fine future toward which thy face
With such glad pride is turned,
Shall grasp and hold thee in a long embrace
Till all its fame is earned.

That chronicle, as yet unwrit, is all
That older lands have won;
And 'twill be grandly more, whate'er befall
Beneath the onlooking sun;

For it shall be the pride of him who stands
All rugged, at thy feet,
To bear aloft the flag within his hands,
Each nook of earth to greet!

And steadily the nations all shall stream
 Through thy wide Golden Gate;
 Oh, California! fair as any dream!
 On thee the world shall wait.

Ah, Fountain! Let thy virginal waters gush
 Freely, to flow unstained;
 And never may thy voice's music hush
 Till all our glory's gained.

Thy Maker and Inspirer, worthy each,
 The soil from which they sprung;
 For Brother-love and love of Art they teach;
 Of these my muse has sung.

San Francisco, September 9, 1897.

DECEMBER IN CALIFORNIA.

I walked today in my garden
 That never fears the frost,
 Where I never, like Bryant, the poet,
 Mourn for the blossoms lost;*
 And I thought of the bleak, bare meadows
 And the leafless woods of the North,
 Where the heralds of the Storm King
 Are girding and riding forth.

I walked where the calla lily,
 Nymph-like, is holding up,
 Out of her exquisite bower,
 Her faultless, creamy cup;
 Where the heliotrope, so fragrant,
 Opens its purple eyes,
 Modest, but frank and generous,
 Forgetting to court disguise.

*"The Death of the Flowers."

Where a thousand roses are smiling
Full in the face of the sun,
As perfect as if their blooming
Had only today begun;
And mignonette runs riot
In the kindly soil at their feet,
While the crowds of dainty marguerites
Whisper, how life is sweet!

Where the tall and sturdy geranium
Flames in the roadside hedge,
And hangs its scarlet blossoms
All over many a ledge;
Near the lemon verbena spicy,
That's like California girls,
Who bare their cheeks to the sea breeze,
And let it ruffle their curls.

And I paused where that fragrant hostage
Of a royal golden dower—
Beloved of brides expectant—
The tropical orange flower,
Revealed by its breath, delicious
As a maiden's dream of love,
Hung, betrayed in its ambush,
As by its murmur, the dove;

By the palm tree, straight and stately,
As some dusky, Orient maid;
Where the humming bird was fluttering,
Radiant and unafraid;
Well I knew he was seeking
For the jasmine's honeyed lips,
Though he lingered where the nectar
Of the white crape myrtle drips.

They're all, all here, the flowers,
Brought from many a land;
And the treasured exotics, fearless,

With the woodland blossoms stand;
And they called their far-off sisters
With one musical refrain:
"You are hiding from the winter,
We're laughing in the rain!"

"Come where there's naught to make us
Shrivel or turn afraid;
Where the wind lilts, like a lover,
Through every ferny glade;
Where a hundred thousand wellsprings
Nourish our grateful roots;
Where a million fostering sunbeams
Warm our growing shoots.

"Come to the flowers' kindest
Refuge on all the earth,
Where the shy and timid violet
All the year looks forth.
For we nod upon the hilltop,
We smile upon the plain,
And while you hide from winter,
We're laughing in the rain."

1897.

MAY IN CALIFORNIA.

O Nature, let me lay my heart,
Dear mother, close beside thine own!
For what true child of thine can say,
"I am left all alone!"

So long as thou dost keep for him
Such peaceful Paradise on earth
As this, where every lovely thing
Is fostered into birth,

And springs into such perfect life
As that worn world, so gray and dim,
That lies so far away from here,
Beyond the horizon's rim,

Knows not and cannot realize,
And sneers to hear of.—Pitiful
The plight of one whom suffering makes
Incredulous and dull.

That Eden should come true again,
Serene as on its natal day,
Smiling beneath the kindest skies
Upon the lap of May;

Who would believe it—seeing not—
That we recover that lost land?
Who would believe us without proof,
Or trust the beckoning hand?

But Nature keeps her precious things
For her true children; gently here
She calls them to her faithful breast
And kindly draws them near.

CALIFORNIA GOLD.

THE ESCHSCHOLTZIA.

Never the grasp of greed, the brutal touch
Of hands sin-grimed and sold
To avarice and lusting over much,
Have soiled thy virgin gold.

Nor thee profaned, rare treasure-trove, that gleams
In El Dorado's earth!
Never thy shining dulled or cankered seems,
Nor cheapened is thy worth.

And with thy unstained wealth we cannot buy
Things garish, things that flaunt;
Thou pleasurest not the coarsened, untaught eye;
Thyself thou dost not vaunt.

And yet, when night thy yellow flag hath furled,
Often I bend, by stealth,
To bless thee for thy day's work in the world,
Thy glad, untrodden health.

For I have marked thee when thou openest
Upon the sun thine eyes,
Baring to him the riches of thy breast—
Scornful of all disguise.

Are thy bright leaves a promise, golden flower,
Of higher, rarer things
Than all the favors that the present hour
To El Dorado brings?

A CALIFORNIA ROSE FAIR.

A feast of roses in the land of gold!
Well might their sisters in Cashmere's fair vale,
That Tom Moore raved about, with poignant envy
Droop and turn pale.

For here these queens of flowers, each one lovelier
Than the preceding, maze us with their splendor,
Until we falter in a sea of beauty,
Half drowned in reveries tender:

Attar of roses! O divinest perfume!
The costliest incense of the Persian clime!
But we can smile at fables Oriental—
We have it all the time!

For here, the rarest roses, elsewhere fostered
 With jealous care, and guarded night and day,
 Are flung into our laps in careless luxury,
 And grow their own sweet way.

Fearless of chilling frosts or storms Atlantic,
 Ah, well might some new Lalla Rookh exclaim:
 This is a rose elysium, angel-guarded,
 Thrice worthy of thy name!

Our land's best gold not in the earth is hidden,
 Its radiance shines upon the upturned faces,
 Even of its flowers, born of the divine,
 Life-giving Sun's embraces.

Therefore, we hold our rose feast of thanksgiving
 For the flower-treasure of our golden year
 In this gold land, clasped by God's love and
 nature's,
 Where life need know no fear!
 May, 1887.

DEL MONTE, MARCH, '87.

Oh! siren-sweet Del Monte smiled,
 Sitting beside the summer sea,
 Bland old Pacific's charming child,
 Brightening the breast of Monterey.

How sped the lovely, luresome days!
 How melted into morn glad nights!
 'Midst her embowered, enchanted ways,
 Nestled amid serene delights.

.

But what? But what? An ominous glow
 Deepened and brightened o'er the bay

And shone across its placid flow.
Startled, we cried: "'Tis Del Monte!"

Ah! who could harm so rare a thing—
And on a night so silver-fair?
Only the trees did shadows fling—
Only did sigh the love-soft air.

And many a heart in many a clime
Shall start with pain and sadly say:
"Burned? There I spent my happiest time;
Alas, for lovely Del Monte!"

THE NEW DELMONTE, DECEMBER, '87.

Out of her ashes she rises,
Created anew,
And steps to the seat that she slipped from,
By the bay waters, blue.

And seeing her sit there serenely,
As fair as of eld,
The tale of her loss seems a rumor
Right swiftly dispelled.

Was it true? Did she perish? Ah, never!
It was but the mist
That came 'twixt our eyes and her splendor—
That was all—I insist!

A SUMMER SONG OF THE SEA.

Betwixt blue and blue!
Face to face with the sky,
Or heart to heart with the ocean,
Lazily let me lie.
Arms of the great Sea-Mother,
Restfulest ye of all,

Even when you lure us downward
Beyond recall.

Betwixt blue and blue!
Fair is the sight of the sky,
Sweet is the breath of the ocean,
Lightly the winds go by!
'Tis the dear sea's heart that calms us
With its rhythmic rise and fall,
And to feel it throbbing beneath us
Is best of all.

Betwixt blue and blue!
Alone with the sea and the sky;
Oh, to lie here forever,
Not questioning why!
With a kind sky's face above me,
And the kind sea's heart below,
Soothed by the wind's light touches
That come and go.

Bay of Monterey, Summer, 1897.

THE HILLS OF SANTA CRUZ.*

*Oak Knoll, Danvers, Mass.,
December 6, 1887.

Dear Friend Howard Glyndon:

"The Hills of Santa Cruz" is a lyric which would do honor to any magazine. Fine in conception and felicitous in expression, it will cling to the Santa Cruz mountain range forever. It will do for the little city by the sea what Bret Harte has done for San Francisco and Mrs. Mace has done for Los Angeles. It will give new interest to the surrounding scenery, and really add to its value in the eyes of the tourist and speculator.

Very truly thy friend,

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

I've seen the far-off Apennines
Melt into dreamy skies;
I've seen the peaks the Switzers love
In snowy grandeur rise;
And many more, to which the world
Its praise cannot refuse—

But of them all, I love the best
The hills of Santa Cruz.

Oh, how serenely glad they stand,
Beneath the morning sun!
Oh, how divinely fair they are
When morn to noon hath run!
How virginal their fastnesses,
Where no Bacchante woos
The kisses of the grapes that grow
On the hills of Santa Cruz!

And then, how beautiful they look
Just when the sun departs,
With benediction on their brows
And homesteads on their hearts!
O hills of Promise, Peace, and Joy!
No heart could well refuse
To own the charm of your delights,
Dear hills of Santa Cruz!

When the reluctant sun hath gone
And left ye lone and sweet,
What rapture then to trace the line
Where earth and heaven meet.
So low ye lie beneath the sky
We ne'er can you accuse
Of harshness or repellant pride,
Kind hills of Santa Cruz!

Ah! no; ye are forever dear
And restful to the eyes,
Tho' ever changeful, yet each change
Is but a glad surprise.
'Twixt gentle skies and gentle seas,
Your outlines never lose
The tenderness that Eden knew,
Calm hills of Santa Cruz!

You stand before us like to those
 Meek angels sent of God,
Who chanted blessings on the earth's
 Imbrued and guilty sod;
So ye, sweet ministers of hope,
 In mind and heart infuse
Peace and good will on earth, O dear,
 Dear hills of Santa Cruz!

And if I be the first to lay
 The laurels at your feet,
Why, then, my heart can only say
 The task is passing sweet,—
For sure I am and sure we are
 Wo ne'er your outlines lose,
There are no hills to match our own
 Glad hills of Santa Cruz!

THE HOMES OF SANTA CRUZ.

What time the east is reddened by
 The flushing of the dawn,
Before the arrows of the Sun
 Are from his quiver drawn;

While the young Day, strong, rising up,
 Shakes from its locks the dews,—
I watch the smoke like incense rise
 From the homes of Santa Cruz!

From where they've climbed to nestle on
 The mountain's swelling crest
To where they peep from out the vale
 As from a sheltered nest.

I deem they are a favored race
 Who rear their Lares here;

Better than gold or gain by far
 These skies so kind and clear;

Sweeter the sight and smell of flowers
 That round these casements blow
 Than all the wealth the warring world
 Holds in its troubled flow.

For nowhere rests the roving eye,
 Commissioned far or near,
 On vine-clad slope or flashing sea,
 But that God's smile is there.

Or broken heart, or broken health,
 Have drawn us from afar,
 But as we cluster here like bees,
 Each well may bless his star.

.

Saw they, those brave Spanish friars,
 Thy hidden glories gleam?
 O Mission of the Holy Cross!
 Saw they, as in a dream,

Thy rounded hillslopes, white with homes,
 That rise before me now,
 What time they stood upon thy beach,
 Or scaled Ben Lomond's brow?

They builded better than they knew—
 Ah, not for somber Spain!
 The clue was in the hands of God,
 And He hath made it plain.

They builded better than they knew
 In planting here the Cross;
 Today their triumph blossoms out
 With no alloy of loss.

Fruit of the Cross's tree! Thy roots
Were nourished in their blood;
Thy germ was quickened by the prayers
Of that lone brotherhood.

The seed came to the waiting soil
From far across the seas,
And found it like those fabled isles,
The gold Hesperides!

O happy homes, on happy hills,
Beneath such happy skies,
I bless ye in the pride of noon
And when the shadow lies

Upon ye, dwellers in the dells,
Amid your leafy haunts
I gaze, and think the heart of man
Hath here no further wants.

O City of the Holy Cross!
O city by the sea!
A blessed balm from many a loss
Is the sweet sight of thee!

Proudly upon thee sits the grace
Of thy immortal name,
Fair flower of the Pacific Slope,
Flushed with the sunset's flame!

CALIFORNIA DIAMONDS.

Who has tossed this handful of diamonds
Into the grass of June—
Into this dew-wet grass through which
The wind goes singing a rune?

Whose the hand so lavish and careless,
 Opened so wide to throw
 Into the flowering grass this peerless
 Treasure that glads me so?

Oh, a handful of clear-cut, shining,
 Virginal, priceless gems!
 Some of them nestling, sparkling, gleaming,
 Close to the green grass stems.

But what setting were fairer, fitter,
 Than this dew-wet grass of June?
 How midst its green they quiver and glitter
 Under the sun of noon!

Here is one like an eye of fire,
 And one outglitters the rest,
 Until I bend me to lift and clasp it
 Close to my envious breast.

O my gems! they glimmer and shimmer,
 And fade like a passing breath—
 Dewdrops caught in a spider's web,
 And my human touch is death.

CAPITOLA.

Like some fair sea-nymph flung ashore,
 Capitola!
 To haunt the briny deep no more,
 Capitola!
 Like some bright, bonny Lorelei lass,
 Thou makest the bay thy looking-glass,
 And beckonest to all that pass,
 Capitola!

Thou'rt like thy name-sake, pretty place,
Capitola!

Thou hast her arch, enchanting grace,
Capitola!

Sly siren of the laughing eye,
Spoiled darling of the sea and sky,
Once glimpsed, we cannot pass thee by,
Capitola!

Thou sittest at the water's edge,
Capitola!

Beneath a friendly, sheltering ledge,
Capitola!

Letting the tide play with thy feet,
Turning thy laughing face to greet
Each comer with a welcome sweet,
Capitola!

In thee, our days glide on like dreams,
Capitola!

Like flowers flung on loitering streams,
Capitola!

With laugh and music, jest and dance,
Surcease from care and restful trance,
And all the glamour of romance,
Capitola!

And then we go; but from afar,
Capitola!

Thy memory haunts us, like a star,
Capitola!

We leave the toil, the stress, the strain,
In thy kind arms rest again,
And listen to the surf's refrain,
Capitola!

MEMORIAL DAY IN CALIFORNIA;

THE G. A. R.

O day of memories dear, yet sad,
Proud tho' regretful, glad yet tender;
The drift and wreckage of the mad
And fiery years of war-time splendor.

Tho' here there be no sight nor sound
Of strife or carnage to remind us
How the red blooms of battle wound
About the stormier times behind us.

No! Not in the wildwood wealth
Of flowers of nature, open handed,
And laughing on in golden health,
Heaps on us, veterans disbanded,

Is there a single one to wake
Old thrills, old pains, old camp-fire stories;
Not one the sight of which can take
Our thoughts back to the awful glories

Of flowerful fields that patriot blood
So cheerfully and richly watered—
Flowers that smiled up to where we stood,
For right and country to be slaughtered.

We cannot say: "Like this and this
Grows on the graves at Arlington;"
Nor with a proud and passionate kiss,
"Like this, behold a battle won."

No; on the old fields where we fought
We left the flowers and many a token;
Nothing to this new land was brought
But memories tenderest when unspoken.

And for the sake of these we stand—
A little, worn-out band, fast thinning—
Today with heart to heart, and hand
In hand, as once at the beginning.

Stronger than links of steel the thought
Of comrades who no longer listen
Nor answer to the roll call; fraught
With tenderness that makes to glisten

The tears in eyes that never fell,
When death stared in them during battle;
That never faltered when the shell
Burst near them with its direful rattle.

O peaceful years, that grew between!
O happy graves, 'neath skies so tender!
And overgrowing what has been,
The present with its glad surrender.

Yet, sad for us when overhead
This day dawns, taking us still further
From the old times, so dear though dread,
And one is missing and another.

For we, whose living hands bestrew
Our comrades' graves in mood memorial
Not long may linger so to do,
And none may wear our robes seignorial.

When none are left our tale to tell,
Not one to answer to the roll,
When all are mustered out and well
We slumber, one victorious whole,

Memorial mornings, fresh with dew,
Shall see our children glad, unscarred
By the fierce fires that we went through,
Strew flowers where "glory mounts on guard."

JUNE.

A song, a song for the leafy June,
With its pleasant morn and its sultry noon;
A song for the month of birds and flowers,
For the month of glorious sunset hours;
The rude spring winds have gone to sleep,
And the hues of the forest's leaves grow deep,
And the shy young rose is blushing out,
And the lazy zephyrs go sighing about,
Making love to the innocent flowers,
Fresh from the bath of the young May showers.
While the flowers and zephyrs fling care away
May not young hearts do the same, I pray!

A song, a song, for the summer's queen,
With her velvet robe of emerald green;
She weareth a wreath on her sunny brow;
Roses, some crimson, some pure as snow;
Her jewels, gleams of the sunlight's gold,
Which softeneth her robe's rich emerald fold;
And the birds of the forest sing gladly out,
Till the earth is thrilled with a musical shout.
You may tell of April's tears and smiles;
Out on the earth's capricious smiles!
And sentiment loves the "young May moon,"
But I love better the beautiful June!

A song, a song for the sunny June,
When the night is short, and the day comes soon;
And after the long, calm, sunny day,
When the golden sunlight hath fled away,

'Tis glorious to watch the twilight sky,
To sit and dream till the heart and eye
Droop down, all full to running o'er,
With a sense of joy ne'er felt before.
Oh! I was born in a southern land,
Where the dreamy winds are always bland,
And I love not the winter's chilling cold,
And its icy snows, and its winds so bold:
No! give me the summer's genial ray—
I would it were beautiful June away!

AN IDYL OF THE ROSE.

You shall see! You shall see!
Thus he panted and half chanted,
" 'Tis a secret 'twixt us three!"

Blithe and brown, and light and free,
He was singing, lightly swinging
On a rose spray, nigh to me.

And a queen rose, bright of bree,
Just above him, seemed to love him,
And looked downward tenderly.

Then, in sudden ecstasy,
Upward flying, sweetly crying,
"O how happy, happy we!"

Nestled close beside her, he
In that haven, in that heaven,
Still sang to her: "You shall see!"

And so well did they agree,
That he kissed her, said "Sweet Sister!"
And flew downward, happily.

There, in that same tall rose tree,
Closely sitting, without flitting,
On a nest with wee eggs three;

His brown wife watched patiently.
His mate haunting, sweetly ranting,
'Twixt the nest and rose, flew he!

.

In the nest are birdies three;
Father, mother—where's the other?
What are these upon my knee?

Rose leaves dropped down fairily
In a shower, from a flower—
She will never, never see!

GREETINGS FROM THE TANANA.

CHRISTMAS EVE IN THE TANANA.

The snow drifts like a christening veil
 Above some wondrous birth;
 The hidden gold lies waiting for
 Its call to upper earth.

The feathery branches of the birch
 Make shadowy all below
 Save where the astral light of heaven
 Rains down in silvery flow.

O, purest shrine to worship at!
 O, haunt of homeless hearts!
 In thy great peace strife fades away
 And brutishness departs.

And up the ladder of God's light
 Climb souls that once did grieve;
 And every sight and sound is peace
 On this white Christmas Eve.

O, warring world that lies afar!
 O, shaken tottering world!
 That cries and crouches lest it be
 Far into chaos hurled.

Beyond these barriers of ice
 One haven is not downtrod;
 One unsoiled spot still lives and loves
 Beneath the smile of God.

Christmas, 1906.

NEW YEAR'S DAY IN THE TANANA

I stood within a charmed ring,
From the worn world far away.
Where all is peace and purity
Upon the Year's first day.

Mysterious 'neath a veiled sun,
The dim day garbed in white
Melts softly to her vestal couch
'Mid dreams of pure delight.

And every sight and every sound
Is chastened into peace,
And far-off discords make the soul
Give thanks for pain's surcease.

New Year's, 1907.

NOME GLORIFIED.

What are you there for, shabby young town?
Why in the world do you sprawl right down
Close to the sea's edge, with your feet in it,
And ruin threatening you every blessed minute?
Fire from the landslide and deluge from the sea?
Yet you look lively and chipper as can be,
But what are you there for?

No! Not for so long as thy shores and thy hills
Are ripe unto bursting with that which fills
The need of the world; of its pillars art thou—
Gold diggers, gold seekers, will show us how.

Ah, the fire may burn you, and the waves rush up,
And of disaster be full your cup;
But ever, and ever, and ever again,
You will rise, tho' you have lain.
Stress shall not kill you,
Nor ravage nor pain.

Oh, Nome, look your last.
See where she sat 'neath the midday sun;
But of her and her moiling, trace there is none.
Only the calm skies have opened wide.

Is it all gone, like a myth, like a dream?
No mean little shebangs, no yellow gold stream?
Come, for the hour of midnight is past,
And from the deck, O Nome, look your last.

See where she sat 'neath the midday sun,
But of her and her moiling, trace there is none.
Only the calm skies have opened wide,
And she and her greed and her squalor have died.

Look, 'tis on all new heaven and earth,
Beyond words lovely in its fair birth.
Far behind the mountains, the glow steals up,
And the ravishing colors together run;
Rose and purple and gold wrap and enfold her,
Transfigure and hold her.

From the crown of her head to the tips of her feet,
Over the waters, where slumber is sweet,
In the heart of the night, with its cold delight,
Oh, now God is good to thee, paltry Nome!

NEW YEAR'S GREETING TO ALASKA.

1908.

Alaska! Our Alaska!
Take heart and face the dawn;
Light cometh surely unto thee,
And shall not be withdrawn.
Joy cometh with the morn to thee,
Although so long delayed,
Whilst thou hast sat in darkness,
Downcast, but not afraid.

Grope in the dark no longer!
Stand up in all thy strength!
Thou shalt be known for what thou art
By all the world at length.
Thy glory shall o'ershadow
The light of lesser lands,
And they shall come to thee at last,
With eager, outstretched hands.

But thou shalt brush them from thy path
As gnats that crowd the air,
The worthless and the cravens
That rob and speak thee fair;
And hope to keep thee, wondrous land,
Bound in their own base toils,
Neglected by a government
That feeds upon thy spoils!

But not for long, Alaska!
The stone that was despised
By the besotted builders

For greatness was devised.
Stand up erect, Alaska!
The world has need of thee,
To feed its poor, to pay its debts,
To set its victims free!

1908.

PRIZE POEM.

[After carefully considering the different poems submitted, the publishers picked out the following as the winner. It was written by Mrs. Laura C. R. Searing, the mother of Mrs. John L. McGinn. She has written many short sketches for different publications, and is known in the world of literature as Howard Glyndon. A number of her poems have been put into book form, and one volume in particular met with marked success.—From the Fairbanks (Alaska) Times, October 20, 1906.]

THE FIRST DOG TEAM OVER THE TRAIL.

'Tis the dear delight of a Malamute dog
To sleep out of doors in the snow;
And curled up snug as a bug in a rug,
You may see them wherever you go,
'Neath the keen, frosty stars in our lively town,
As soon as winter sets in;
But all the same each one comes at his name
When the tasks of the trail begin.

Out comes the master, looking much like
Santa Claus in his holiday togs.
With a shrill "Ki-yi!" and a snapping lash
He rouses his sleeping dogs.
"Hi! here you, Captain!" The collar goes on
The big leader's willing neck;
And see how the others leave off playing
And bound to his friendly beck.

"Move on, you, Coffee! Get up, you, Bum!
Hootch, you scamp! Keep in place!

You rascal, Fritz! you're so glad you can hardly
Let me fasten the trace!"
Ki-yi! Ki-yi! Ting-a-ling, ling, ling!
Mush on, you frisky fellows!
Till the dusk shuts down on the glimmering town,
And the low sun fades and mellow.

Ki-yi! Ki-yi! and ho! for the trail!
Mush on, you Malamute scamps!
For there's nothing so dear to the 'Laska dog
After a summer long and lazy,
As the joy of the trail in its snowy veil
Through the woods so bare and hazy.

TO THE ARCTIC SUN.

January 12, 1904.

Hallo, Sol! That you, for sure?
Why, you're a sight to make sore eyes well!
Than angels' visits yours have been fewer
For a long, cold, dreary Arctic spell.

Now, ol' feller, get up an' rustle!
You've left us so long, too long, in the dark.
'Tis you, and you only, that keeps us awake.
Come to stay? Haven't you? Say you will!
Can't do without you—Old Pard, shake!

Rush them steeds o' your'n from their cosy quar-
ters,
An' drive them high on the noontide track;
An', glory be, but we'll make things sizzle,
A-celebrating your comin' back!

DEATH TRAP OF THE SNOWS.

[A body was found buried in the snow, only a hand being visible.—Extract from Nome paper.]

The stainless depths of the treacherous tundra,
In baffling mystery, melt away
In the far beyond, and conquered and sullen,
Where the day is night and the night is day.
Thou ridest high in the Arctic heavens,
O, Dian, Goddess of icy woes!
What seest thou down in that sinister splendor,
That merciless death trap of the snows?

A hand, as erect as if carved in marble,
As still as marble and colder than death;
The snow has woven its shroud about him,
But he lifted his hand with his latest breath!
Ah, helpless hand, so mutely imploring
For life, dear life, even while you froze!
Poor danger signal! that waved unheeded
Above that tragedy in the snows!

Yes, when the awful combat was over,
And death set his foot on the man's cold breast,
That lifted hand spoke of hope unconquered,
While his eyelids drooped in the last, cold rest.
His funeral dirge, the wailing death-note
Of his faithful dog, keeping watch at his side;
No other sight or sound in the whiteness,
Stretching away so far and wide!

Thou great White Silence! Thou terrible Threaten-
ing!
That puny man should confront thee, sole.

Ah, but the inroads he makes upon thee
Shall win him yet the victory whole.
Meanwhile, what tragedies pass unwritten,
What dreadful legends surround thee, Nome?
The mad encounter, the futile resistance,
The snow-hid grave and the broken home!
Nome, Alaska, Winter of 1903.

